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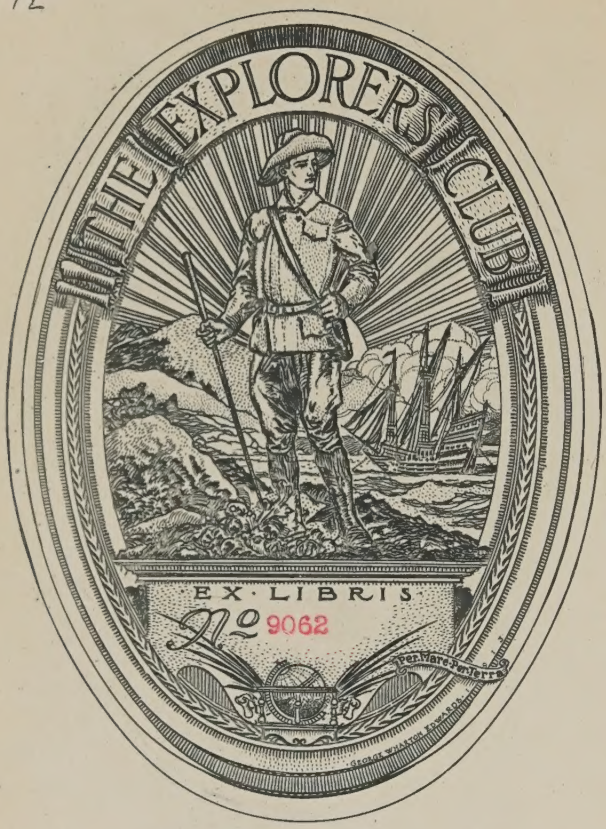


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# PUBLICATIONS OF THE CHAMPLAIN SOCIETY

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## LE CLERCQ:

## NEW RELATION OF GASPESIA

TORONTO
THE CHAMPLAIN SOCIETY

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# NEW RELATION OF GASPESIA

## With the Customs and Religion of the Gaspesian Indians

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BY

FATHER CHRESTIEN LE CLERCQ

TRANSLATED AND EDITED, WITH A REPRINT OF THE ORIGINAL, BY

WILLIAM F. GANONG, PH.D.
PROFESSOR IN SMITH COLLEGE

TORONTO
THE CHAMPLAIN SOCIETY
1910

# PREFACE

THE eastern parts of Canada are fortunate in many respects, and among others in the character and quantity of the original literature devoted to their exploration. The narratives of Cartier, Champlain, Lescarbot, the Jesuit Fathers, Denys, Father le Clercq, and Diéreville, constitute a treasury which, for historical importance and absorbing human interest, can be rivalled by few countries. It is a satisfaction to recall that no less than five of these seven great works are, or are soon to be, accessible in worthy form, both in reprint and annotated translation. Of the remaining two, Father le Clercq's work is presented in this volume; and it is no breach of confidence to add that a similar edition of Diéreville's book is in preparation by the same editor.

In the above list, the names of our eminent first writers are given in chronological order, but, incidentally, this order also expresses very nearly the relative importance of their works. The *Nouvelle Relation de la Gaspesie* of Father le Clercq, the subject of the present volume, certainly should be placed after the works of all of his predecessors, but it is not on that account of mediocre worth. It is true, it narrates no very important events, and the historian of Canada may justly pass it with only brief mention; but it yields to no other in the value and interest of its matter from other points of view. I need not anticipate by explaining its characteristics at this place, for I wish now simply to make clear its general place in the historical literature of Canada, and the reason for its inclusion in the publications of the Champlain Society.

As in the case of the work of Nicolas Denys, which I have already had the privilege of editing for the Society, my right to undertake the translation and annotation of Father le Clercq's book is based neither upon special knowledge of old French, nor upon any particular competency as a translator, but it rests upon a somewhat intimate, and certainly very loving, knowledge of the matters to which it is devoted. My deficiencies as a translator, however, have been an advantage to the work, since my consciousness thereof has led me to enlist the aid of others who could speak upon the various doubtful matters with high authority, as the list of their names, to be given a little later, will sufficiently attest.

A translator, as I have found, can never please everybody. Some would have him render the original, regardless of its literary merits, into a book of clear and flowing English: others hold that the original should be followed just as literally as clearness will permit, while many insist that only a middle course is suitable. I have considered that this multiplicity of opinions leaves me free to please myself, and accordingly I have tried to make just such a translation as I like to read, viz., one which renders clearly the meaning of the original while retaining as much as possible of its flavour. For this reason, I have not been at pains to avoid awkwardness where the original exhibits it, although, for the sake of clearness, I have sometimes had to depart rather widely from a literal rendering. I should consider it wholly wrong, even had I the power, to make a translation marked by a literary elegance absent from the original. As to proper names, I have left them in all cases untranslated, and in their exact original spelling, excepting only in a few cases of very common words, like Nouvelle France, and St. Laurent, where I have used the familiar English form.

In the reprint of the French text at the end of this volume, I have sought to reproduce the original in every detail as exactly as modern type can be made to do it. It

is therefore copied word for word, letter for letter, misprints, typographical accidents and all, even to the extreme of retaining at one place (at the end of page xxii of the Dedication) an erroneous catchword, which becomes misleading, or at least meaningless, in the reprint. I am well aware that some of my fellow-students will condemn such a policy as accuracy run mad, but I believe it is the only logical plan. If, in reprinting a book, an editor begins to make changes or corrections of any sort, there is no logical stopping point, and the reader will never know how far he can trust the reprint. The French text has been set direct from a copy of the original work, and the proofs have been read repeatedly and very carefully ; consequently I feel confident that few, if any, mistakes have managed to creep into this part of the work. The original pagination is included, at the requisite places, in square brackets, but that of the Dedication and of the Table of Contents, given in Roman numerals, is added by myself for convenience of reference, since the original is unpaged.

There is one feature to be expected in a work of this kind which the reader may miss, and that is a bibliography of works connected with Father le Clercq and his book. Such a bibliography I prepared, but for sundry practical reasons I found it better to distribute it through the footnotes, in which I believe it is complete. The reader can readily find the title of any desired work through the Index, in which it is suitably indicated.

In the preparation of this work I have taken full advantage of the friendliness with which scholars are accustomed to aid one another in their researches, and I have not scrupled to call upon many for such aid as I have thought they could render. I have tried to acknowledge all such assistance at suitable places in the pages which follow, but there are certain kind correspondents whom I wish especially to mention at this place. First of all, is M. Philéas Gagnon, Keeper of the Judicial Archives of Quebec, who has done me the great service of reading my translation, in conjunction with the

original, throughout. His suggestions have saved me from errors and improved my interpretation in many places; and he has also furnished me with many valued items of information, and certain of the best of my illustrations, notably the autograph of Father le Clercq. Invaluable also has been the aid of two other scholars whose names are often mentioned in the notes in the following pages, Fathers Hugolin and Odoric of the Franciscan Monastery of Quebec. They have read the proofs throughout, have made many valuable suggestions, and have especially, out of their rich stores of accurate knowledge, supplied many invaluable facts concerning the early Recollect missionaries. The connection of Fathers Hugolin and Odoric with this work has given me a particular satisfaction, not simply because of their direct and valuable contribution towards its completeness and accuracy, but also for another reason, with which I am sure the reader will fully sympathise. The Franciscans are the successors in Canada of the ancient Recollects, of whom Father le Clercq, our author, was one of the most prominent members; it is, therefore, particularly pleasing and appropriate that the heirs of his order and of his service in Canada should thus take a prominent part in the publication of this record of the life and work of their illustrious predecessor. I am perfectly ready to agree to the reader's natural thought at this point that it would have been more appropriate still, and perhaps also greatly to the benefit of the work, had I left its preparation entirely to them; but it can readily be understood that this was forbidden by many circumstances. Among others whose aid I would especially acknowledge, is my friend, Mr. Victor H. Paltsits, State Historian of New York, who has contributed not only the bibliographical description which bears his name, but much advice and other assistance as well. I am greatly indebted, likewise, to Mr. Wilberforce Eames, of the Lenox Library, who kindly lent his unrivalled collection of editions of the *Nouvelle Relation* from which the bibliographical description and several of the illustrations of

this work are made, and to Mr. Frederick L. Gay, of Brookline, Mass., through whose courteous aid I am able to present the valuable illustrations from his uniquely-illustrated copy of the *Nouvelle Relation.* Also, I have received many courtesies from the authorities of the Harvard College Library, and from Mr. Thomas J. Kiernan in particular; they have generously lent me many valuable books for the furtherance of this study. And I have had aid which calls for warm acknowledgment from several others: from Rev. Father Pacifique, of the Indian Mission at Restigouche, in connection with Indian matters; from Mr. H. P. Biggar, of the Canadian Archives, for his successful pursuit of the Jumeau map, reproduced in this book, long lost and only recovered by his persistence; from M. Placide Gaudet of the Canadian Archives, for his expert aid in the solution of some difficult problems, and from Professor J. M. Clarke of Albany, for several items about Gaspé, of which he has a unique knowledge. I wish also to express my obligation to Dr. Doughty of the Canadian Archives, and at the same time my conviction, based upon considerable experience, as to the invaluable service which the Archives Branch is rendering to historical investigation in Canada, and my admiration for the enlightened policy which secured its foundation and promotes its development. Finally, I wish to acknowledge also the aid of the President of the Champlain Society, Dr. B. E. Walker, who has read the proofs, and of the Secretary, Professor G. M. Wrong, who has not only read the proofs, but has rendered courteous service to the author at every possible turn. To all of these, and those others whose names are mentioned in the following pages, I wish to express not only my acknowledgments, but also my warm appreciation and sincerest thanks.

W. F. GANONG.

NORTHAMPTON, MASS.,
*February* 1910.

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# INTRODUCTION

## FATHER CHRESTIEN LE CLERCQ, AND HIS GASPESIAN WORK

THE Gulf of Saint Lawrence lies right across the ancient way to Canada, and all that part of its coast which is south of the track of the ships forms a remarkable semicircle, sweeping grandly round from Gaspé on the north to the Isle of Cape Breton on the east. This region exhibits physical features so different, and has had a history and development so largely distinct, from Canada on the west and Acadia on the south, as to make it well-nigh, even though not quite, an independent geographical and historical province. It was first explored and mapped, in large part, by Cartier, who found there a considerable Indian population. Later it became the resort of French fishermen and traders, and the field of the labours of many a zealous missionary. Then it was the scene of the efforts of the Denys, father and son, to establish a vast seigniorial estate and a separate sub-government. In time it became the refuge of exiled Acadians, and for a while was the only Acadia. Finally, its historical distinctness persisted even to our own period, for it received the ancestors of its present English-speaking settlers direct from Great Britain, and not by way of the older English colonies as did the neighbouring districts. Yet, strangely enough, in all this time it never achieved a name of its own. At first it was viewed as

nothing but an indefinite part of New France; later it was treated by many as a part of Acadia; to the Denys it was only Les costes de la Grande Baye; a few called it Gaspesia; while in our own day the residents of the four Canadian provinces among which it is divided know it always as the North Shore. To this coast, as a missionary to its Indian tribes, there came, in 1675, a Recollect priest of marked capacity, Father Chrestien le Clercq, who laboured for nearly twelve years in the Indian settlements from Gaspé to Miramichi, and, after his return to France, published a book describing these Indians and his life among them. This is the book, this the author, and this the subject which form the theme of the volume now before the reader.

Concerning the life of Father le Clercq we know but little, and that is mostly told by himself. Both Henry Harrisse and John Gilmary Shea have made studies of his biography, as recorded in their works mentioned below, and it is only by virtue of the almost microscopic character of the study I have had to make of Father le Clercq's book that I am able to add anything to the accounts of these two distinguished scholars, and to correct some of their minor errors.

Father le Clercq was born, according to Harrisse,[1] who, however, cites no authority, in the province of Artois, which is in the Department of Pas-de-Calais, France, while Shea,[2] without mention of the source of his information, further locates his birthplace at Bapaume in that province. Some slight support is accorded to the correctness of the province at least by our author's own affectionate reference to Artois in his book.[3]

[1] *Notes pour servir à l'Histoire . . . de la Nouvelle France, Paris*, 1872, 158.

[2] Introduction (6) to *First Establishment of the Faith in New France. By Father Christian le Clercq, Recollect Missionary. Now first translated, with Notes, by John Gilmary Shea. New York: John G. Shea*, 1881. *2 vols. pp.* 410 *and* 354.

[3] His *Nouvelle Relation*, translated in this volume, 557.

The year of his birth is given by the biographical dictionaries[1]—which, however, are so erroneous as to the date of his coming to Canada and his first voyage to France as to throw suspicion upon this—as about 1630, while Shea, again without citation of authority, gives it as about 1641. The latter date, however, is confirmed by the census of 1681, which gives his age as forty years.[2] According to his own statement in another book which he wrote,[3] he was the first to enter into the novitiate of the Recollects, or Reformed Franciscans, after the erection of the new Franciscan province of Saint Anthony of Padua; and, according to custom, he must have assumed the name Chrestien at this time, his earlier baptismal name being different. Nothing further is known of his life or work until 1675, when, as he tells us himself,[4] he inducted into the novitiate at the Monastery of Arras that Emmanuel Jumeau who was afterwards his devoted colleague in the Gaspesian missions. Meantime he was chosen for the Canadian missions, he and Father Zénobe Membré[5] being the first of the religious selected. In 1675, as he states himself,[6] and in August according to an authentic contemporary document,[7] he landed for the first time in Canada.

[1] *Biographie Universelle*, and others copying one from another.

[2] Published in Sulte's *Histoire des Canadiens-Français*, V. 53.

[3] His *Premier Etablissement de la Foy*, described later on page 19 of this volume (Shea's *First Establishment of the Faith*, II. 88).

[4] *Nouvelle Relation*, 188.

[5] His *Premier Etablissement de la Foy*, II. 116 (Shea's *First Establishment of the Faith*, II. 88). Father Membré was his cousin, and a letter is extant in which he makes inquiry for the health of Father Chrestien (Margry, *Découvertes . . . des Français*, II. 212). As Fathers Hugolin and Odoric tell me, Father le Clercq had also a brother, Maxime, likewise a missionary in Canada.

[6] *Nouvelle Relation*, 22.

[7] *Histoire chronologique de la Province des Récollets de Paris sous le titre de St. Denis en France, depuis* 1612 *qu'elle fut érigée jusqu'en l'année* 1676. *Composée par le Très Revérend Père Hyacinthe Lefebvre, Père de la Province des Récollets d'Artois, des Custodies de Flandres et Provincial de la province de Paris. A Paris, chez Deny Thierry, rue St. Jacques, à l'enseigne de la ville de Paris* 1677. A copy (apparently unique) exists in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris, and it contains at the end a MS. addition for the years 1676 to 1686.

The beginning of Father le Clercq's new labours was under conditions not at all auspicious. Despite the fact that the Recollects had laboured zealously and successfully in Canada from the first foundation of the colony down to its seizure by the English in 1629, they had been excluded thereafter down to the year 1669, when they were permitted to return as an offset to the increasing power and growing unpopularity of the priests of the Jesuit order. When the first of the new group of the Recollects reached Canada in 1670, the supreme ecclesiastical authority was in the hands of Monseigneur de Laval, afterwards first Bishop of Quebec, who was not in sympathy with the influences which had brought them to Canada, and perhaps not friendly to the methods of the Recollects themselves.[1] He appears to have assumed that they had come to Canada rather for meditation than for active service, whereas, naturally enough, they desired their share of labour in the Indian missions. The Governor, Frontenac, was, however, wholly their friend, and it was through his intervention that the Gaspé mission was assigned to the Recollects, or, as our author[2] puts it, "This mission has been assigned to us with the consent of Mon-

In Chapter XXII. it is stated that Father le Clercq set out from La Rochelle, along with Fathers Ozon, Hennepin, Buisset, and Membré in June, and reached Quebec in August. I am wholly indebted to Fathers Hugolin and Odoric for a knowledge of this precious work.

A different date, viz. 25th September, is given for Father le Clercq's arrival in Canada by Réveillaud, in a work mentioned a few pages later in this volume (page 8, note 3); but the statement is unsupported by authority, and is probably incorrect.

[1] In this statement I have been influenced by Shea's Introduction to his *First Establishment of the Faith*, which seemed to be confirmed by some other evidence. Fathers Hugolin and Odoric, however, have shown me an important letter (published in the *Revue du Tiers-Ordre et de la Terre Sainte; Bulletin Mensuel Publié par les Franciscains du Canada*, July 1908), written by Bishop Laval, in November 1670, to the Recollects, in which he expresses the greatest friendliness to them and good wishes for the success of their Order in Canada, to which they were then returning.

[2] *First Establishment of the Faith*, II. 80; also *Nouvelle Relation*, 20.

seigneur de Laval . . . by Monsieur le Comte de Frontenac." This was in the year 1673, at which time the mission, a vast one which extended indefinitely towards Cape Breton, was vacant, although the Jesuit Fathers had laboured there at several places long before, as their *Relations* amply attest, and as our author himself takes occasion to mention. The first Recollect priests of the mission were Fathers Hilarion Guesnin, who came to Canada in 1670, but whose connection with the mission is not clear, and Father Exuper Dethunes, who came to Canada apparently in 1671, and went to Isle Percée in 1673, where he remained as priest to the French fishermen and residents until 1683.[1] Then in 1675 Father le Clercq was assigned to service among the Indians of this mission, and took up the labours which he continued with only minor interruptions for the next twelve years.

It was in the autumn of 1675 that our author, provided with a licence from the Bishop of Quebec permitting him to exercise priestly functions for three years,[2] set out from Quebec for Isle Percée, which he reached after a stormy passage on October 27.[3] Soon afterwards he took up his residence at Petite Rivière, now called Barachois, where Pierre Denys, Sieur de la Ronde, had a fishing and trading establishment, and began to prepare himself, through the study of the Indian language, for the work of his mission. He spent most of the winter of 1675–76 at Petite Rivière in a way he fully describes[4]; but towards the spring he began his life in the Indian wigwams at a village on Gaspé Bay.[5] He spent the summer of 1676 with the Indians of Restigouche,[6] and in September went to Nepisiguit, where

[1] *First Establishment of the Faith*, II. 80, and note on page 75 of the present volume.

[2] The licence is given in a note on page 202 of this volume.

[3] *Nouvelle Relation*, 22.

[4] *Op. cit.*, 24.

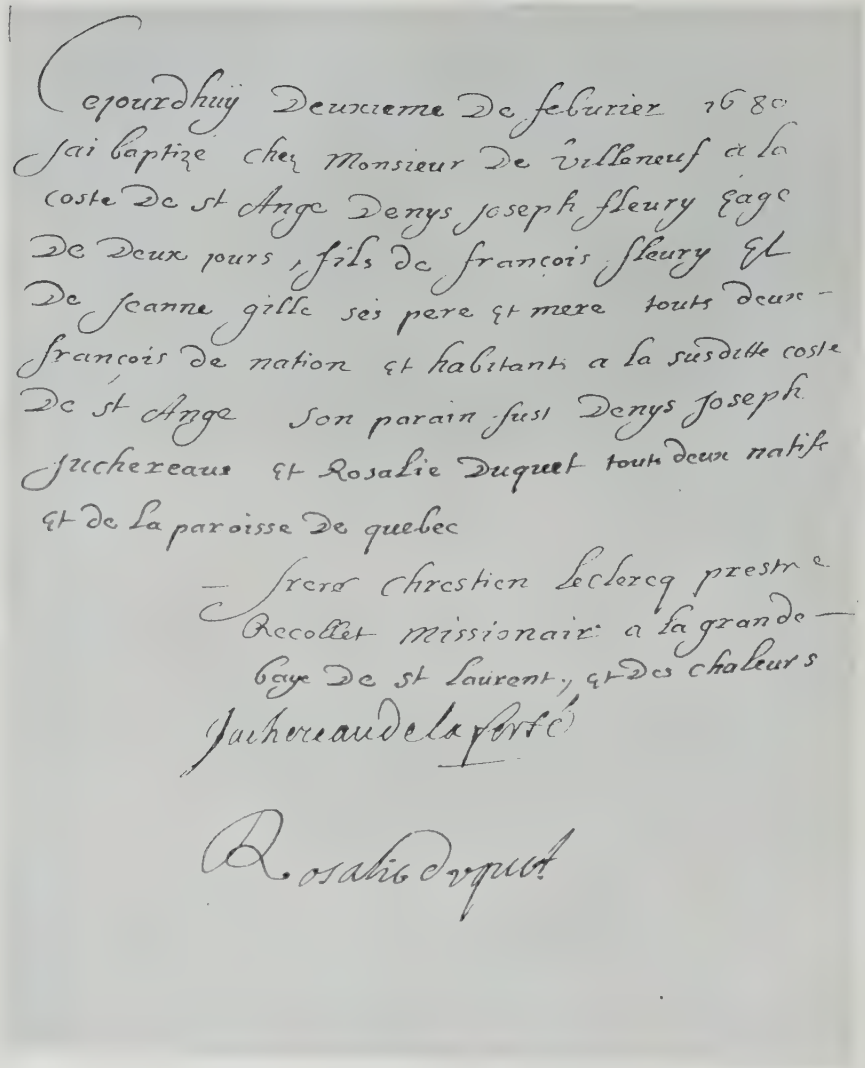
[5] *Op. cit.*, 498, and note on page 288 of this volume.

[6] *Op. cit.*, 273, and note thereto on page 192 of this volume.

he remained four months.[1] Then in January 1677 he went to Miramichi, making that difficult midwinter voyage, replete with hardship and danger, which he describes so fully and graphically in his book.[2] He remained at Miramichi apparently until summer, after which he seems to have visited Quebec.[3] It was sometime during this year[4] that he invented the remarkable system of characters, or hieroglyphics, which he designed as an aid to the memories of his Indians in repeating their prayers. This system, which has survived down to our own day, has played a great part in the religious instruction of the Gaspesian, or, as we now call them, the Micmac Indians ; and it is a subject of such interest that I shall give it a special discussion later in this chapter.

Despite the devotion with which he laboured among his Indians, Father le Clercq soon felt the force of the colossal obstacles to their conversion, in their indifference, superstition, and drunkenness, which had discouraged his predecessors ; and in 1679, after four years of effort,[5] he questioned whether it was worth while to waste his strength longer in so fruitless a field. He placed the matter before his Superior, Father le Roux, who wrote him the unanswerable letter which our author reproduces in full in his book ;[6] and with renewed courage he resumed his labours. His own book appears to state[7] that he visited Father le Roux at Quebec in the same summer (1679), but, as will be shown later in this volume,[8] he seems to have confused two events, and the visit from which he was carried by his impatient Indians back to Restigouche probably occurred in 1678. He appears to have accepted the invitation of Father le Roux, contained in the letter

[1] Data in his book, as explained in a note on page 164 of this volume.
[2] *Nouvelle Relation*, chapter xi.
[3] *Op. cit.*, 281, and note on page 195 of this volume.
[4] *Op. cit.*, 141, and page 22 of this volume.
[5] *Op. cit.*, 278, and note at page 194 of this volume.
[6] *Op. cit.*, 279.
[7] *Op. cit.*, 133.
[8] Footnote to page 128.


Cejourdhuy Deuxieme De feburier 1680
Jai baptize chez Monsieur De Villeneuf a la
coste De St Ange Denys joseph fleury fage
De Deux jours, fils de françois fleury Et
De Jeanne gille ses pere et mere touts deux
françois de nation et habitants a la susditte coste
De St Ange Son parain fusl Denys joseph
Juchereau et Rosalie Duquet tout deux natifs
et de la paroisse de quebec
— frere chrestien Leclercq prestre
Recollet missionaire a la grande —
baye De St Laurent, et des chaleurs
Juchereau de la ferté
Rosalie Duquet

AUTOGRAPH OF FATHER LE CLERCQ

Photographed from the original in the Roman Catholic Bishop's Palace at Quebec

(*About three-fourths the original size*)

afore-mentioned, to spend the winter of 1679–80 in Quebec, for on October 30, 1679, he was at Ste. Anne de Beaupré near Quebec, as shown by a certificate[1] of a marriage ceremony which he celebrated at that time, while on February 2, 1680, as shown by the very precious autographic certificate presented herewith,[2] he was at Coste de St. Ange, now St. Augustin, near Quebec. Early in the next summer (1680), he was sent to France on an important errand connected with the building of a Recollect hospice at Quebec and the foundation of a Recollect establishment at Montreal.[3] On the way he stopped at Isle Percée, and then occurred the very interesting incident of the Indian speeches which he describes so fully in his final chapter. In the same chapter he relates some incidents of his winter in France and of his voyage back to Quebec, which he reached in the summer of 1681.[4] He then made a journey to Montreal in connection with the same business, and two days after his return to Quebec, in the latter part of October, he departed for Gaspesia to resume the duties of his mission.[5]

This voyage to France marks off the period of Father

[1] For a copy of this document I am indebted to Fathers Hugolin and Odoric. It is not written by Father le Clercq, nor signed by him, but is the work of a curate.

[2] For the photograph of this most interesting document, the only known autograph of Father le Clercq, I am indebted to the kind interest and aid of M. Philéas Gagnon, of Quebec, who was enabled to obtain the copy through the courtesy of l'Abbé Lionel Lindsay. I find that its existence and importance have long been known to Fathers Hugolin and Odoric.

The location of the Coste de St. Ange, mentioned therein, was unknown to me, and apparently to other students as well; but M. Placide Gaudet, of the Archives Department at Ottawa, applied to the problem his great knowledge and investigating skill, and settled beyond question that the Coste de St. Ange was an early name for the modern St. Augustin, above Quebec.

[3] *Op. cit.*, 528; the year is fixed by data given in a note under page 571 of his book (page 321 of this volume).

[4] *Op. cit.*, 571, and note thereto at page 321 of this volume.

[5] *Op. cit.*, 571. The census of 1681, cited on an earlier page (3) of this volume, appears to show that he was in Quebec on 14th November, so that, writing from memory, he apparently puts his departure too early.

le Clercq's Gaspesian labours into two nearly equal parts—an earlier about which we know something, and a later about which we know little. The obscurity as to his second mission, as he calls it, is largely explained by the fact that he intended to describe its events in his other book,[1] though in fact no such account appears in that work, for reasons which will be given a few pages later. We know, however, this much. In 1684 he was still at work among his Gaspesians, as a mention in Father Bigot's Relation of that year[2] makes plain, and a document was signed by him in November of that same year at Quebec, as "Frère Chrestien Le Clercq, P.R., missionnaire des Gaspesiens."[3] The chronology of his movements for the next three years I have not been able to elucidate. He could not have been at Miramichi in 1684–85–86, for the facts given by Monseigneur de Saint Valier in his well-known book[4] show that Father Thury was on that river in those years, and certainly these two missionaries could not have been there at the same time. Nor could he have been the "good religious of the order of Recollects," whom Monseigneur de Saint Valier mentions as living with great regularity among the French at Isle Percée, for his duties lay not with the French but the Indians.[5] It is altogether

[1] *Nouvelle Relation*, 572.

[2] *Jesuit Relations*, Thwaites' edition, lxiii. 71; reprinted in a note to page 206 of this volume.

[3] *Réveillaud, Eug., Histoire Chronologique de la Nouvelle France ou Canada . . . par le Père Sixte le Tac, Recollet. Publiée pour la première fois d'après le manuscrit original de* 1689 *et accompagnée de Notes et d'un Appendice tout composé de documents originaux et inédits. Paris*, 1888, ix. + 266 *pp.*, page 229. The part of this work by Le Tac, which in any case is wholly a compilation from known works, has only a slight connection with our present subject, but several of the new documents presented by the editor are of much value for the data they give upon Father le Clercq's movements, and upon the history of Isle Percée where he laboured.

[4] *Estat present de l'Eglise et de la Colonie françoise dans la Nouvelle France, par M. l'Evêque de Quebec. Paris*, 1688. Also a reprint, Quebec, 1857.

[5] Besides, as Fathers Hugolin and Odoric point out to me, this good religious was certainly Father Joseph Denis (Denys), of whom a biography by Father Hugolin is now appearing in the *Revue du Tiers-Ordre et de la Terre Sainte*, mentioned in the footnote on page 4 of this volume.

aux Deputez que le Chef de cette Nation m'avoit envoïez, de la riviere de Sainte-Croix à Nipiſiquit, pour me prier de les aller catechiſer.

## CHAPITRE XI.

*Relation du penible Voïage de l'Auteur, allant annoncer la Foi aux Gaſpeſiens Porte-Croix.*

IL eſt bien vrai qu'il n'y a que Dieu ſeul qui puiſſe adoucir, par l'onction de ſa grace, les travaux Apoſtoliques des Miſſions laborieuſes de la Nouvelle France: auſſi faut-il avoüer ingenûment, que toutes les forces de la Nature ne ſerviroient qu'à augmenter les peines des Miſſionnaires, ſi la Croix d'un



A SPECIMEN PAGE OF FATHER LE CLERCQ'S *NOUVELLE RELATION*

(*Original size*)

likely that in these years Father le Clercq spent most of his time at Restigouche, and elsewhere around the Baie des Chaleurs. During this period he inducted into the Miramichi mission his well-beloved colleague Father Emmanuel Jumeau, an event which probably occurred in 1682 or 1683.[1] Before his return finally to France, and probably in the year 1686, he dedicated the church of Saint Peter at Isle Percée, nearly losing his life in the preparations therefor, as he relates fully in his book.[2] He tells us positively in his other book, and more than once implies in this, that he returned finally to France in 1687.[3] Since, however, a letter written by Monseigneur de Saint Valier early in 1687 speaks of him as then in France,[4] he must have returned the preceding autumn, unless, like Monseigneur de Saint Valier himself, he left Canada late in 1686 and reached France early in 1687. After this date we know very little indeed concerning him. He became Superior of the Monastery at Lens, as the title-pages of his books attest. Harrisse,[5] who is followed by Shea,[6] gives the date of his death as 1695, citing Paquot's *Mémoires*[7] as authority, but, as I know from a personal search, Paquot makes no such statement, and the date is no doubt taken from the unreliable biographical dictionaries already cited. On the other hand,

[1] *Nouvelle Relation*, 188, and note thereto on page 153 of this volume.

[2] *Op. cit.*, 17; the year is fixed by data given in a footnote on page 73 of this volume.

[3] *Premier Etablissement de la Foy* (*First Establishment of the Faith*, I. 316), and *Nouvelle Relation*, 31, 279.

[4] Published by Réveillaud in Le Tac, *Histoire Chronologique*, 231. The date (1685) assigned by Réveillaud to the letter is obviously wrong, since its own statements show that it was written after its writer's return to France, which was in February 1687. Other internal evidence shows that it was written early in that year.

[5] *Notes*, 158.

[6] Introduction to *First Establishment of the Faith*, I. 22.

[7] Paquot, M., *Mémoires pour servir a l'Histoire litteraire des dix sept Provinces des Pays-Bas, de la Principauté de Liege et de quelques contrées voisines.* Louvain, Vol. III., 1770, page 555. This work gives a sketch of Father le Clercq, containing, however, very little except a synopsis of the more interesting matters in his *Nouvelle Relation.*

Father Hennepin's *Nouvelle Découverte* of 1697, or at least the English edition, *A New Discovery*, of 1698[1] speaks of him as "Definitor of our Recollects of the Province of Artois," implying that he was living in that year. Father Hennepin, it is true, should not be cited as authority on historical matters, but I cannot conceive of any motive he could have had in falsifying an incidental remark of this nature. But as to the real year of his death, or any further facts concerning his later life in France, we have no information so far as I can discover.[2]

Such is our scanty knowledge of our author's life, which was more useful than eventful. Aside from the good that he did, which does not die, few memorials of him exist, and of these the most important are his two books, his system of hieroglyphics, and a few scattered records connected with his missionary duties. Indeed, although many of the latter must exist, I have seen a copy of but a single one—the very interesting autograph certificate which is presented in photographic facsimile herewith, and which exhibits this phase of our author's personality in a very pleasing light. But his memory has not been without honour in our own day, as two incidents attest. A few years ago his name was applied to a prominent mountain near the head of the Nepisiguit River,[3] although it is too early as yet for us to know whether it will persist and come into general use. And finally, more recently, a true lover and eminent scientific investigator of the land where Father le Clercq laboured so long has applied his name

[1] Thwaites' edition of 1903, II. 370.

[2] Fathers Hugolin and Odoric write me that a MS. *Table générale des Récollets de la Province de St. Denis*, of about 1750, of which a copy is in their possession, mentions Father le Clercq among the deceased religious, but without stating the date of his death, which appears to have been even then unknown. My own several efforts to discover, through the aid of local students at Lens and Arras, any additional facts about the later life and the death of our author have been fruitless. (On a possible portrait, see note to page 27.)

[3] As recorded in the *Bulletin of the Natural History Society of New Brunswick*, Vol. IV., 1899, 254.

de quebec
R. de l'Esturgeon. Septentrional
R. aux Sorciers
ou
de la Sapompe
R. de la Grande Pierre
R. de la Grande Pierre d'Alcantara.
R. Platte.
R. de S. Laurent
R. de S. Bonaventure
R. de Jesus.
R. des Kakouagoi
R. des Kakouagoi
R. des Kakouagoi

FATHER JUMEAU'S MAP OF 1685

Photograph from the original in the Bibliothèque nationale

*(About two-thirds the original size)*

to two fossils newly discovered at Percé Rock and Gaspé Basin.[1]

We turn now to consider the book which is translated and reprinted, both for the first time, in the present volume. It is a neatly-printed little duodecimo of about six hundred pages, the appearance of which can be learned from the sample reproduced herewith,[2] while all of the interesting details as to its bibliographical history and characteristics are presented by the hand of a master a few pages later in this volume. The book contains no pictures, and usually no maps, although the map of New France, made to illustrate his other book, is sometimes found in this. The Eastern portion is reproduced in this volume,[3] partly because it is our author's, and partly in illustration of his own travels in this country. But a far more important map exists, virtually a map of Gaspesia, drawn in great detail by our author's friend and colleague, Father Emmanuel Jumeau ; it illustrates Father le Clercq's book as perfectly as if he himself had drawn it for the express purpose, and accordingly it is reproduced in this volume.[4]

[1] Professor J. M. Clarke, in his *Early Devonic History of New York and Eastern North America* (Albany, New York, 1908), 117 and 228. The fossils are called *Tentaculites leclercqia*, and *Pleurotomaria sulcomarginata*, var. *leclercqi*.

[2] Opposite page 9. [3] Opposite page 14.

[4] Opposite this page. Its title, printed upon it, reads thus in translation :—

"*The Grande Baye of Saint Laurens in New France,—shown in a light in which it has not up to this time appeared,—correctness, curious features and accuracy having been embodied therein so far as has been possible, and as the information of the residents of the same country have been able to furnish; in addition to this is the actual knowledge which the geographer has of several places, especially of the River of Sainte Croix, where in making his mission he has several times had the honour to worship great crosses erected in the midst of the wastes and the woods by the native Indians belonging to those places, and named porcrois, having received the cross miraculously from heaven a long time before the arrival of the French in this country. Made by the R. Father Emmanuel Jumeau, Recollect missionary in Canada, 4 Oct.* 1685."

The place of this map in the cartography of this region is discussed in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, III., 1897, ii. 363, and XII., 1906, ii. 58, and another note thereon is contained on page 152 of this volume.

The title of the book, *Nouvelle Relation de la Gaspesie*, involves two matters needing comment. The *Nouvelle* was no doubt used to mark a distinction from the older *Relations* of the Jesuits, some parts of which were concerned with the same country and subjects. The name *Gaspesie* was apparently adapted from that of the Indian inhabitants (Gaspesiens), who in turn derived their name from Gaspé,[1] the most prominent place of their resort. They had been called Gaspesiens from the time of Lescarbot, who used the equivalent form Gaspeïquois,[2] while the *Jesuit Relations* of 1667–68 and later[3] called them Gaspesiens, as does our author. But the place-name *Gaspesie* here makes its appearance for the first time. It was adopted by the geographer De l'Isle on his important type map of 1703, as the accompanying excerpt will show, and it appears also in a few other records of that time. This map of De l'Isle, by the way, has a particular interest in this, that it assigns to Gaspesie definite bounds and limits, which, except for running too far west, correspond in general with the nearly-natural historical and geographical province of which I have already spoken, and with the territory of the Denys which they called "les costes de la grande baye."[4] But the name Gaspesie, or its equivalent Gaspesia, never came into general geographical use, which is a pity, for Canada, Gaspesia, and Acadia constitute a strikingly pleasing trio of place-names. The word has, however, survived, like Acadia, in literary usage; and, moreover, it is said that the French residents of the modern district of Gaspé still use it, in the form *Gaspesy*, as a general name for the region.[5] In my

[1] A discussion of the origin of this word is contained in a note on page 63 of this volume.

[2] In *Les Muses de la Nouvelle-France*, under "La Deffaite des Savvages Armovchiqvois."

[3] Thwaites' edition, LI. 175; also LX. 262, and LXIII. 71.

[4] Our author himself once speaks of the region under the name "great bay" (*First Establishment of the Faith*, II. 103).

[5] In J. M. Clarke's *Sketches of Gaspé* (Albany, New York, 1908), 6.

Riviere de S. Laurent
GOLFE S. LAURENT
Isles de la Madelaine
Baye des Chaleurs
M. de Miscou
I. Carnquet
I. Bonaventure
Gaspé
Grands Eskimaux
TERRE NEUVE
Baye de la Trinité
Baye de la Conception
Cap Raz
I. du Cap Breton
Port Royal
Souriquois
BAYE FRANCOISE
Pentagouet
Pemquit
Abnakis
Etechemins
CHAMPLAIN
Isle de Sable
Banc aux Balenes
Port de la Hague
Port Rossignol
Port aux Espagnols
Baye de Plaisance
Baye de Frelay
Baye d'Espe
Baye Blanche
Cap Pointu
Cap de Rapé
Cap de Sable
Cap de Canseaux
Cap de Chédabouctou
Cap Breton
Cap de Gaspé
Cap de Rosiers
Cap de Monts pelez
Cap de Dame Marie
Cap de Sable
Cap Fourchu
Cap de Canseaux
Cap de Chédabouctou
Cap Breton
Cap de Rapé

translation I have used Gaspesia (and Gaspesians) rather than Gaspesie (and Gaspesiens) in order better to preserve the analogy with Acadia and Canada.

The book opens with a Dedication, graceful but inflated, to the author's patroness and friend, the Princesse d'Epinoy. The first chapter, professing to deal with Gaspesia in general, is awkwardly composed, and bears evidence of hasty rearrangement in order to admit a letter of Father Jumeau. But this letter was worth the disturbance, for it contains by far the most detailed account we possess of the destruction of the settlement at Isle Percée in 1690, an event for which we must henceforth blame not the expedition of Phips, as commonly supposed, but privateers from the State of New York. This chapter contains a rather unsatisfactory description of the country, but some valuable notes on the origin of the mission, our author's arrival, and his early labours there. His second chapter discusses the origin of the Gaspesians, according to their own traditions and European speculations, and introduces our author's favourite theme of the worship of the Cross among the Miramichi Indians,—a subject of such prominence in the book that I shall give it a separate discussion later in this Introduction. The third chapter, devoted to the birth customs of the Gaspesian Indians, introduces those clear, matter-of-fact, detailed descriptions of Indian life and customs, in part confirmatory of other accounts and in part new matter from personal observation, which constitute the most valuable material embodied in the book. The fourth chapter contains the narration of the author's observations as to the Indian dress, ornaments, painting of the face, dressing of the hair, and other related matters, and he testifies to the modesty of the Gaspesian women. The fifth chapter describes, in the same satisfactory manner, their wigwams and home life, both material and moral, to the advantages of which the writer is by no means insensible ; and nowhere in our literature

have we a better picture of the home life of the Indians. This chapter is enlivened by one of those logically unanswerable Indian speeches in which our author seems to take a considerable pleasure. The sixth chapter treats of the food, cooking, famines, suffering, and occasional cannibalism of the Indians, all as before with much valuable detail. The seventh chapter, after certain comments upon the ignorance and a natural cleverness of the Indians, is devoted chiefly to an account of the invention and use by our author of a system of hieroglyphic characters designed to aid the memory of his converts in remembering their prayers,—another subject of such importance and interest that I shall treat it apart in a later place in this Introduction. The eighth chapter, on the language of the Indians, is all too brief, for it gives but a few pages of general remarks to a subject which our author could have treated as a master. The ninth chapter deals with their religion, but gives little more than an account of their ancient worship of the sun as introductory to a subject of more consequence in our author's mind—their worship of the Cross—to which he devotes the entire tenth chapter. The eleventh chapter, abnormally long, contains a most interesting and well-written narrative of the author's adventurous mid-winter voyage from Nepisiguit to Miramichi, during which he was like to have perished ; and incidentally he gives some very precious facts as to local settlements and their proprietors, notably Richard Denys, Sieur de Fronsac, and Philippe Enault, Sieur de Barbaucannes. He then describes some incidents of his mission to his Cross-bearer (Miramichi) Indians, and again comes back to the origin of their worship, giving us incidentally a clue to its real meaning, as will be shown in the section devoted to the subject later in this Introduction. He also tells how he wavered in his labours and thought of leaving a field productive of so little fruit, and he prints a long and illuminating letter from his Superior, Father le Roux, who answers his objections in a way which

A PORTION OF THE *CARTE GENERALLE DE LA NOUVELLE FRANCE* (1691) ACCOMPANYING FATHER LE CLERCQ'S *Premier Etablissement de la Foy*

*(Original size)*

left him no course but to remain. In his twelfth chapter he gives at length an Indian tradition concerning Papkootparout, ruler of the Land of Souls, and the way in which he gave to men the gift of corn and tobacco ; and the tale is of interest for the clearness with which it reflects the Indian conception of a desirable future life. In the thirteenth chapter our author returns to his personal observations upon the Indians, and gives a very interesting account of their jugglers or medicine men, with some details not elsewhere recorded ; and then he adds a number of the many superstitions prominent in their daily lives and habits. And he tells how certain Indians, women as well as men, assumed the functions and aped the ways of the priests. The fourteenth chapter describes the duties and the limited authority of the chiefs, their striking conception of *noblesse oblige*, their treatment of law-breakers, and many of their customs which had the force of laws. The fifteenth chapter describes the customs of the Gaspesians, their admirable physique and sturdy health, their simple and peaceful life, their hospitality, certain peculiarities of their temperament, and again the modesty of the women. He does not spare their uncleanly habits and disgusting eating manners, including their habitual drunkenness, of which the ravages are strongly pictured, with a denunciation of the liquor traffic. The sixteenth chapter tells in detail of their marriage customs, in that matter-of-fact and obviously observational spirit which gives so much value to these chapters on Indian customs. The seventeenth chapter describes their mode of making war, gives accounts of their battles with their hereditary foes the Esquimaux, and relates a highly ornamented tradition as to the origin of their strife. The eighteenth chapter treats of hunting the moose, beaver, and other animals, and gives brief accounts and lists of the various Gaspesian mammals, birds, and fishes. But our author was no naturalist, and this chapter does not rise to his opportunities, though his comments do contain several

welcome items of information. Chapter nineteen treats of the Indian amusements, shows the high place held in their lives by their innumerable feasts and their many kinds of speeches, and describes their dances and games. The twentieth chapter mentions the few remedies sufficient in their healthy lives, and tells systematically of their sicknesses, death and funeral customs—all in the direct, clear, systematic manner which becomes increasingly manifest as the book progresses. The twenty-first and final chapter is devoted to the author's first voyage to France after a residence of five years in Canada. On the way he stopped at Isle Percée, and there his Indian foster-father made to him the remarkable speech which is given in full. And finally, with an account of his winter in France, and the incidents of his return to Canada and his mission, Father le Clercq closes this book.

Such are the principal matters set forth in Father le Clercq's *Nouvelle Relation de la Gaspesie*. It is evident that he who seeks in its pages any material of wide historical significance will find disappointment, and he may even agree with Father Charlevoix, who said of this book: "A coast that is a waste; some little islands and harbours where the fishery is made; Indians who come and go from Acadia and its neighbourhood;—that is what Gaspesie is and the Gaspesians, whom our author names *Porte-Croix* from a false tradition. It is not the wherewithal from which to fill up a volume of 600 pages with very interesting matters."[1] It is by no means necessary for us to seek an explanation of this opinion in the fact that Father Charlevoix was a Jesuit and Father le Clercq a Recollect, for such an opinion was natural enough to any student who was seeking material for

[1] *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, II. lv. The words in the original are: "*Une Côte déserte, quelques petites Isles, & des Havres, où l'on fait la pêche; des Sauvages, qui vont & viennent de l'Acadie & des environs; voilà ce que c'est que la Gaspesie, & les Gaspesiens, que l'Auteur appelle* Porte-Croix, *sur une fausse tradition; & ce n'est pas de quoi remplir un Volume de* 600. *pages de choses fort intéressantes.*"

a great work intended to interest the reader of that time. The value of the *Nouvelle Relation* to us is of a kind of which neither author nor critic could have had any idea. As one of our minor historical sources capable of yielding materials of value to modern critical study, as a repository of interesting fact concerning the early days of our native land, as a piece of the rare but precious literature having the power to make us feel something of the spirit of its times, the book has a high and enduring even though very local value.

We turn now to the important question as to the value of the work as an authority. In places the author's statement of facts is inaccurate, as in the case of the erroneous dates and inscription he assigns to Cartier's voyage,[1] and the inconsistent chronology of his own life in Canada.[2] He obviously exaggerates many details, and invents others for the purpose of giving some incidents a more instructive or dramatic treatment, as in his narrative of the Basque murderer,[3] and his account of the importance of the Cross to the Indians of Miramichi.[4] But so many of his statements are fully confirmed from other sources, while most of them withal are given in so matter-of-fact and direct a manner, that I believe there is no question as to the trustworthiness of his treatment of all important matters in the entire *Relation*. Certainly there is no doubt, in my opinion, as to the author's intention to tell always the literal truth, though at times, it is true, he tells it to better advantage than the bare facts by themselves could do. If we make allowance for the fact that most of his data were doubtless written down purely from memory, and that he had a marked temperamental tendency to magnify and embellish matters which could be turned to account in his calling, for the rest we may trust his work fully.

[1] *Nouvelle Relation*, v., and note thereto in this volume (page 50).
[2] *Op. cit.*, 136, and note thereto in this volume (page 128).
[3] *Op. cit.*, 453, and note thereto on page 268 of this volume.
[4] Page 37 of this Introduction.

In places in the book there is obvious influence of other works which the author used in preparing his own. His treatment of some matters strongly suggests that of Father le Caron as contained in a document which he gives in full in his other book ; while here and there, in certain turns and topics, I think I can detect the influence of Denys' well-known work. But a perfectly plain case is his use of Father le Jeune's *Relation* of 1634, from which he extracts a striking brief passage, together with a less important longer one, taking them almost word for word, but with such changes as were necessary to make them apply to his Gaspesians.[1] This latter statement expresses, I think, the nature of the use he made of these books. He had them beside him as he wrote, and used them to refresh his memory, and as sources of suggestion for matters which he might otherwise have forgotten to speak of. Now and then, when he found a passage which expressed particularly well the matters he was describing, he followed it closely, sometimes even to the very words ; but in such cases he modified or altered the statements of fact to make them express the truth about his particular subject. His plagiarisms, which in any case were in accord with the custom of the time, were not so much of matter or ideas as of form. Moreover, some of his apparent use of material from other works is doubtless simply the result of the use by all authors of the time in common of certain conventional phrases, stories, or ideas which were then in wide circulation.

In general the book is clearly written, but it is curiously uneven in style. In some places, and notably in the very first chapter, it is clumsy, and occasionally a little obscure. Elsewhere it is perfectly clear, strong, and even graceful. In general it may be said that the book improves in literary merit as it advances, and some passages taken by themselves

[1] *Nouvelle Relation*, 447, 477, with notes thereto on pages 277 and 263 of this volume.

justify a far more favourable judgment than can be accorded to the book as a whole.[1] Here and there occur curious irregularities of another sort, in certain disjointed passages which obviously do not stand in their original relations to their context,[2] and they have to me an appearance suggesting that the manuscript of the book was longer, but was cut for brevity in the printing. The book has a few misprints in the French text, perhaps two dozen in the entire work, but in the Indian words and sentences the misprints are very numerous, as the notes under those words will show. This seems to indicate that the proofs of the book were carefully read by some one familiar with good French, but quite unfamiliar with the Micmac expressions, which in turn is evidence that Father le Clercq was not himself the proof-reader. This point may have some bearing upon his part in the publication of his other book, for it shows almost certainly that he did not see in proof, as probably he did not in the final MS., the remarkable material which appeared in that work under his name.

The *Nouvelle Relation de la Gaspesie* was not Father le Clercq's only book, for in the same year he published another with the following title :—

*Premier Etablissement de la Foy dans la Nouvelle France, contenant la Publication de l'Evangile, l'Histoire des Colonies Françoises, & les fameuses decouvertes depuis le Fleuve de Saint Laurent, la Loüisiane & le Fleuve Colbert jusqu'au Golphe Mexique, achevées sous la conduite de feu Monsieur de la Salle. Par Ordre du Roy. Avec les Victoires remportées en Canada par les armes de Sa Majesté sur les Anglois & les Iroquois en*

[1] Thus, in the Champlain Society's edition of Denys' work, 25, I have expressed a far more favourable opinion of the literary merit of this book than I can now endorse after a more thorough study. It may be some explanation to say that I had been reading its best passages in comparison with the average of Denys, to whose work it is certainly greatly superior in a literary way.

[2] *Nouvelle Relation*, 52, 153, and notes thereto in this volume.

1690. *Dedié à Monsieur le Comte de Frontenac, Gouverneur & Lieutenant General de la Nouvelle France. Par le Pere Chrestien le Clercq Missionnaire Recollet de la Province de Saint Antoine de Pade en Arthois, Gardien des Recollets de Lens. Tome I. A. Paris, Chez Amable Auroy, ruë Saint Jacques, attenant la Fontaine S. Severin à l'Image Saint Jerome. M.DC.XCI. Avec Privilege du Roy. Tome I. pp. XXVII.+ 559; Tome II. pp.* 458.[1]

This work is of much more general importance than the *Nouvelle Relation*, because it includes some original material, nowhere else accessible, upon the early explorations of the Mississippi Valley. It has been translated by J. G. Shea under the title, *First Establishment of the Faith*, and Shea's Introduction leaves little to be added as to the historical status of the work. As Harrisse, Shea, and others have pointed out, it is a remarkable book, containing material, especially satirical attacks upon the Jesuits, which it is altogether unlikely that Father le Clercq wrote, although other parts are undoubtedly his work. It was early asserted that

[1] This work, identical in every detail of the text, was also issued under two other titles. The first, 1691, bore only the author's initials, and the title began: *Etablissement de la Foy dans la Nouvelle France, Contenant l'Histoire des Colonies Françoises, & des Découvertes, qui s'y sont faites jusques à present*, &c., &c. The other, published anonymously in 1692, is entitled: *Histoire des Colonies Françoises et les fameuses découvertes depuis le fleuve de S. Laurent, la Loüisiane & le fleuve Colbert jusqu'au Golphe Mexique, achevées sous la conduite de feu Monsieur de la Salle*, &c., &c. The full biographical details are given in Shea's well-known translation of the work, entitled *First Establishment of the Faith* (described in a note to page 2 of this volume).

A number of investigators have considered the historical status of this work, and its author's part therein, of which the principal are: Shea, in his *Discovery of the Mississippi Valley*, in *Louisiana Historical Collections*, IV., 1852, 78, and the Introduction to his *First Establishment of the Faith;* Harrisse in his *Notes pour servir à l'Histoire . . . de la Nouvelle France*, 158; Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, I. lv.; Rochemonteix, *Les Jesuites et la Nouvelle-France au XVII^e Siècle* (Paris, 1896), III. 37; Margry, *Découvertes et Etablissements des François* (Paris, 1879), I. xviii.; Parkman, *Pioneers of France*, edition of 1901, II. 4; Field, *Indian Bibliography* (New York, 1873), 231; Biggar, *Early Trading Companies of New France* (Toronto, 1901), 290.

Frontenac, or Father le Roux, had something to do with its preparation, but this is uncertain. In view of the problems as to its authorship, I have been especially interested in reading the work carefully (in Shea's translation, for I have not seen the very rare original) in comparison with the *Nouvelle Relation*. It is plainly very uneven in style, and characterised by some sudden transitions of both matter and motive. In places I have thought, though this may be fancy, that I could detect interpolated passages. A notable feature of Father le Clercq's style in the *Nouvelle Relation*, and one which has given me much trouble in the translation, viz. the use of two coupled words meaning almost the same thing, does not appear at all for pages together in the *Premier Etablissement* (at least not in the translation), although in other passages it is prominent. Moreover, as is well known, the *Premier Etablissement* does not contain mention of certain matters, viz. an account of the Gaspesian missions after 1681, which are said in the *Nouvelle Relation* to be there.[1] All of the facts taken together, including the point as to the proof-reading mentioned on a preceding page,[2] appear to be in harmony with the probability that Father le Clercq prepared himself the manuscript of both books, but that he entrusted the *Premier Etablissement* to some other who, omitting a part of our author's material in order to make room for his own, inserted such matter as he wished in condemnation of the Jesuits, who are mentioned only with respect in the *Nouvelle Relation*. I am of opinion that an exhaustive comparative study of the style of the two books would enable a competent student to separate Father le Clercq's own matter from that of his unknown co-author.

We turn now to consider more closely certain matters of special importance in Father le Clercq's *Nouvelle Relation*. First comes the system of written characters, or hieroglyphics, which he designed as an aid to the memory of his neophytes

[1] *Nouvelle Relation*, 572.

[2] Page 19 of this volume.

in repeating their prayers. He tells us[1] that he first conceived the idea of them in the second year of his mission, that is in 1677, and that they were suggested to him when he noticed that certain Indian children made marks with charcoal upon birch bark, and counted these off as they repeated each word of the prayers. This use of marks, of various kinds, as aids to the memory, was widespread among American Indians, as is amply attested by the evidence set forth in technical works[2] and by various records in connection with the Algonquian tribes. Thus in the *Relation* of the Jesuits for 1642–43[3] it is said of certain Indians at Sillery: "When the Father began to instruct them, they would count the points and the questions on their fingers; but, the number coming to exceed that of the fingers, they would mark them on pieces of bark, making certain figures which represented for them the sense of some clause." Again, in the *Relation* of 1646,[4] it is said of the Montagnais that some of them "wrote . . . after their fashion, on small pieces of the bark of trees." Again, Father Druillettes, referring to the Abnakis, wrote in the *Relation* of 1651–52[5]: "Some would write their lessons after a fashion of their own, using a bit of charcoal for a pen, and a piece of bark instead of paper. Their characters were new, and so peculiar that one could not recognise or understand the writing of another,—that is to say, they used certain signs corresponding to their ideas; as it were, a local reminder, for recalling points and articles and maxims which they had retained. They carried away these papers with them, to study their lessons in the

[1] *Nouvelle Relation*, 141.

[2] For example, in Mallery's great monograph upon Picture-writing of the American Indians, in the *Tenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, D.C., 1888–89). This work contains an excellent brief discussion of the history and nature of these hieroglyphics, with citations from our author's work.

[3] Thwaites' edition, XXIV. 83.

[4] *Op. cit.*, XXIX. 133.

[5] *Op. cit.*, XXXVIII. 27.

quiet of the night." And Bressani, in the *Relation* of 1653, speaking of the Indians of New France in general, says[1]: "Fourthly, a very tenacious memory. They have neither books nor writings; negotiations are carried on through embassies, in which I have been amazed to see how many things and how many circumstances they recollect. But this faculty shines forth still more in the Captains, who use little sticks instead of books, which they sometimes mark with certain signs, sometimes not. By the aid of these they can repeat the names of a hundred or more presents, the decisions adopted in the councils, and a thousand other particulars, which we could not rehearse without writing." It seems at first sight anomalous that a people with memories so good as are ascribed to these Indians should need memory-aids of such nature as their sticks or marks; but the explanation is contained, I believe, in a peculiarity of the Indian mind very clearly set forth by Father Biard in his *Relation* of 1616,[2] in speaking of the Micmacs: "They have a very good memory for material things, such as having seen you before, of the peculiarities of a place where they may have been, of what took place in their presence twenty or thirty years before, etc.; but to learn anything by heart—there's the rock; there is no way of getting a consecutive arrangement of words into their pates." Father Biard's statement agrees with other evidence we possess in showing that while the Indians had very good memories for individual matters, including the association of facts, events, or even ideas with visible objects, their memories were very poor for sequences or series of facts, events, or ideas—just such sequences as are the essential feature of "committing to memory." An obvious equivalent for committing to memory in their case would be, therefore, the method of associating each idea with a definite symbol and arranging these symbols in the desired order; and this method the Indians obviously had hit upon

[1] Thwaites' edition, XXXVIII. 261. [2] *Op. cit.*, III. 73.

for themselves. It was the method, indeed, by which they "read" all of their wampum records. It would not matter what the form of the symbol for a certain idea might be, and therefore different Indians could use different symbols for the same idea, while the same Indian could use different ones at different times. No doubt, however, the signs were fundamentally of the picture-writing type, that is, they were more or less conventionalised pictures; and it is possible the Indians had some which were understood by them all, though of this we have no definite knowledge since no specimens of these aboriginal symbols, for the Algonquian tribes at least, have come down to us.

Such was the foundation which Father le Clercq had for his system when he began its elaboration in the early days of his mission—a foundation which had been equally available to all of his predecessors, but which he was the first to have the keenness to utilise. In brief, we may say that he found his Indians capable of remembering tenaciously any association of word, fact, or simple idea with a written arbitrary symbol; he found them more or less accustomed to the use of series of such symbols to aid in recalling a sequence of facts or ideas; and perhaps he found them provided with some generally understood picture-symbols for the commonest objects, though these must have been extremely few. No doubt our author, in developing his system, made use of all existent symbols, and in other respects utilised everything already available in this connection; but the words and ideas involved in the prayers he desired to teach were so many and so unfamiliar that he must have had to begin practically anew. He tells us[1] that he "formed" (*formez*) these characters, by which he could only mean that he invented them, and then he describes them thus: "Each arbitrary

[1] *Nouvelle Relation*, 129. The important sentences in the original are: *certains caracteres que j'ay formez*, and *chaque lettre arbitraire signifie un mot particulier, quelque-fois même deux ensemble.*

letter signifies a particular word, and sometimes two together." In another place[1] he speaks of his system as a formulary to aid the memory through the use of certain characters; but unfortunately, although he speaks often of the "instructive papers" on which they were written, and of their extensive use by the Indians, he nowhere gives any further description of the characters themselves, much less any examples. He made, however, a great many, for he says[2] he augmented their number to enable him to teach not only the Prayers of the Church, but the Sacred Mysteries of the Trinity, of the Incarnation, of the Baptism, of the Penitence, and of the Eucharist.

Such is the record of the invention by Father le Clercq of a hieroglyphic system of characters for representing the Prayers of the Church to the Micmac Indians. As is very well known, there has long been in use, and indeed still survives, among these same Micmacs, but not among the allied tribes, a system which agrees in every respect with that of our author in so far as he describes it. The conclusion is natural that the two are one and the same, and this it would probably not occur to any one to doubt were it not for two circumstances—namely, it is generally believed by those having knowledge of the existent Micmac system that it was invented by l'Abbé Maillard, a prominent, scholarly, and active missionary to the Micmacs in the middle of the eighteenth century, and moreover l'Abbé Maillard himself appears to claim that he invented them. In a letter written by l'Abbé le Loutre in 1738[3] it is stated that M. (later l'Abbé) Maillard is "introducing his system, to which he has been giving thought for some time. It is that

[1] *Nouvelle Relation*, 141. [2] *Op. cit.*, 142.

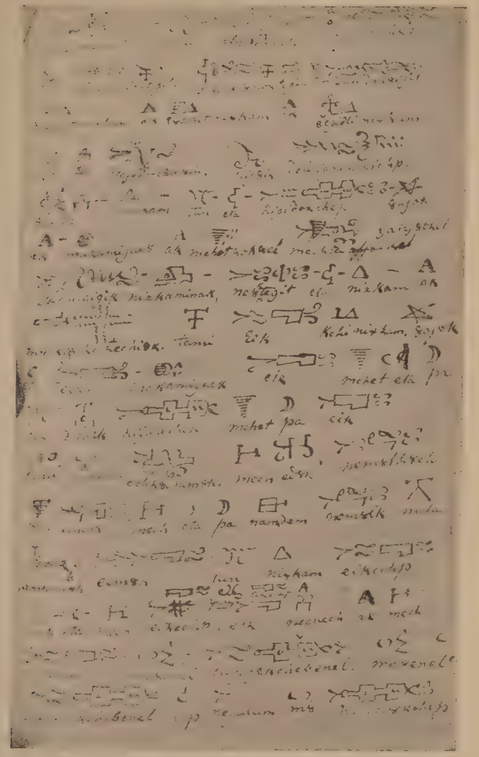
[3] In *Le Canada-Français, Documents Inédits*, I. 21. The words in the original are: . . . *mit au jour son sistême auquel il pensoit il y avoit quelque temps. Ce sont des hyérogliffes differents auxquels il a determiné sa signification par le moyen desquels nos Sauvages, après en avoir appris la signification, comme des enfants qui apprennent celle des lettres alphabétiques, lisent dans les cahiers qu'on leur donne aussy bien que les françois dans leurs livres.*

of different hieroglyphics, to each of which he has assigned a meaning; and by means of them our Indians, after having learned their meaning, as the children learn that of the letters of the alphabet, read in the copy-books which are given them as readily as the French read in their own books." Later he writes[1]: "M. Maillard has given me all the prayers of the Indians with an interpretation of the words which are contained therein—the hieroglyphics." Again, in a letter written by l'Abbé Maillard himself,[2] at a date unknown, but certainly much later than that of l'Abbé le Loutre, he says: "In order to make them learn more quickly, and with much more ease than they could heretofore, the prayers, the chants, and the instructions that we desire they should know, we distribute among them copy-books on which we have traced in hieroglyphics, which we have invented ourselves, all the words of which these prayers, chants, and instructions are composed. With the aid of these different characters they learn in a very short time everything they wish to learn, and when they have once got into their heads the form and value of each character, they name with astonishing ease everything of the same sort which is written in their books. We make them read them from left to right, as in our own writing, all the hieroglyphics being placed horizontally on a straight line and separated from one another by little horizontal marks." He then describes the way the Indians were taught to use the characters, and adds: "We congratulate ourselves very much upon having found this means to teach them to learn the prayers by heart so easily."[3] He then adds a description of their use by the Indians which agrees very closely with the statements

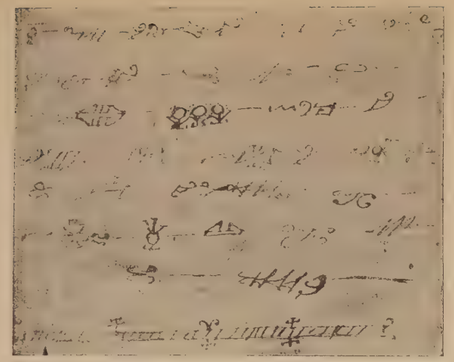
[1] *Op. cit.*, 22. The words in the original are: *Mr. Maillard ma donné toutes les prieres des Sauvages avec une interpretation des mots qui y sont contenu, les hyérogliffles.*

[2] Published in *Les Soirées Canadiennes*, III., 1863, 355.

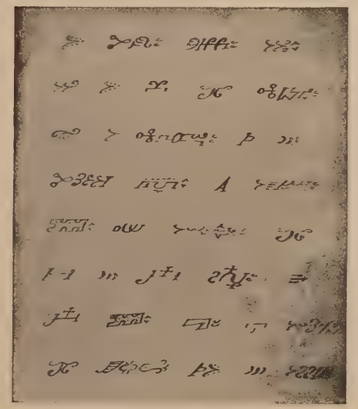
[3] The words of the original are: *Pour leur faire apprendre plus promptement et avec beaucoup plus de facilité qu'ils ne faisoient cy-devant les prières, les chants et les instructions que nous souhaitons qu'ils sachent, nous leur distribuons des cahiers sur lesquels nous leur avons tracé en hiéroglyphes, que nous avons inventez nous-mêmes, tous les mots dont se trouvent composez*



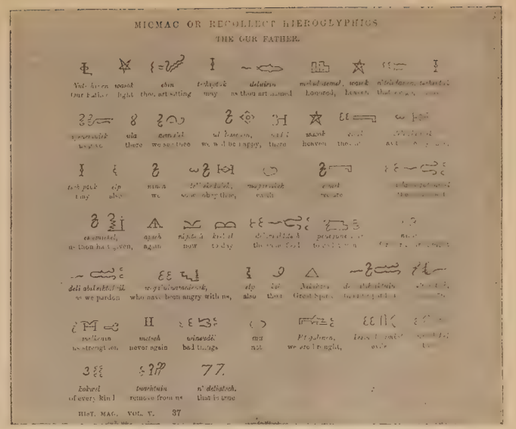
From a MS. written by L'Abbé Maillard; ×⅔



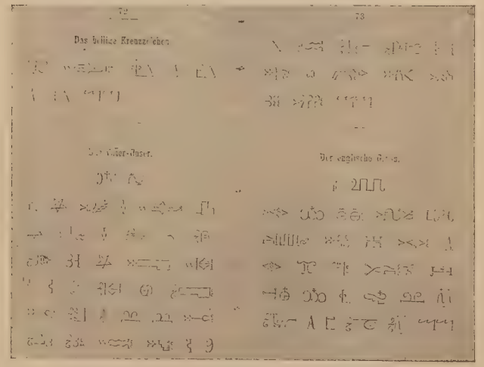
From an early MS. in the Bibliothèque Nationale; ×½



From a MS. in the Library of Congress; ×⅔




From an article by J. G. Shea; ×⅔



From Kauder's printed "Katechismus"; ×½

EXAMPLES OF THE SYSTEM OF MICMAC HIEROGLYPHICS, OR CHARACTERS, ORIGINALLY INVENTED BY FATHER LE CLERCQ

*(Photographs, all reduced from the originals)*

of Father le Clercq, and he gives much more of interest in the same connection, though nothing essential to our present inquiry. It happens, fortunately, that l'Abbé Maillard has left us examples of his characters written by his own hand, and a page of these is reproduced in the accompanying photograph.[1] It is only necessary to compare this sample with some of the modern examples given upon the same plate to settle one point of our inquiry: namely, the modern hieroglyphics of the Micmacs are identical with those used by l'Abbé Maillard.

We now face the crucial question of this inquiry—Was l'Abbé Maillard's system invented by him anew, or does it bear some relation to that of Father le Clercq? This can only be settled finally by the possession of a good sample of our author's system, and such, I believe, we possess in the first of the illustrations reproduced on the following plate.[2]

*ces prières, ces chants et ces instructions. A l'aide de ces différens caractères, ils apprennent en très-peu de temps tout ce qu'ils veulent apprendre; et quand ils ont une fois bien mis dans leur tête la figure et la valeur de chaque caractère, ils nomment avec une facilité étonnante tout ce qui ce trouve écrit de même dans leurs cahiers. Nous les faisons lire de gauche à droit comme nous, tous les hiérogiyphes étant placez horizontalement sur une ligne droite, et séparez les uns des autres par un petit trait horizontal.* And then later: *Nous nous félicitons fort d'avoir trouvé ce moyen de leur faire apprendre si facilement par cœur les prières et les chants*, &c.

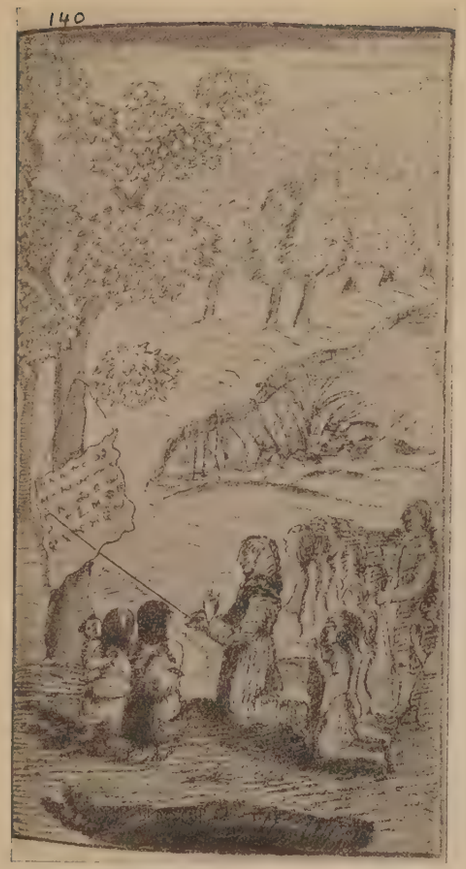
[1] For this copy I am indebted to the kind aid of M. Philéas Gagnon, to whom, indeed, this book owes very much. The MS. is in the Library of the Archbishopric of Quebec, and is that mentioned in Pilling's *Bibliography of the Algonquian Languages* (Washington, D.C., 1891), 334. Pilling questions whether this part of the MS. book is by l'Abbé Maillard, but M. Gagnon, who has examined it, assures me that he has no doubt whatever upon this point.

[2] There is not, I believe, any question as to the genuineness of the connection between the authorship of these illustrations and of the *Nouvelle Relation*. Aside from the characters shown by the first, the second reproduces the peculiar form of the Micmac canoes so faithfully, and the third and fourth show a use of the cross, and other features, so like the testimony of the text, that it seems to me certain they cannot be the work of any conventional illustrator, but only of some one who knew personally and sympathetically the matters treated in the book. Accordingly I think it likely they were drawn by Father le Clercq himself, or else by Father Jumeau (whose map at page 11 shows his skill as a draughtsman). In the latter case the priest shown in the first picture may represent Father le Clercq.

By careful comparison I find that about half of the characters shown on the tablet against the tree are identical with those still in use. It is perhaps a matter of some weight, also, that l'Abbé Maillard had apparently been in Acadia only a short time when he was ready to make use of his system in 1738. Indeed, the only statements I have been able to find as to the time of his first arrival in Acadia place the date in 1738 or later,[1] though l'Abbé le Loutre speaks as if l'Abbé Maillard then knew the Micmac language. It is of course possible, but unlikely, that in the short period of l'Abbé Maillard's residence among the Indians he had independently developed characters for representing "all of the prayers." It is true that Father le Clercq had commenced to develop his system within two years after his first arrival, but his development of the characters for most of the prayers obviously, from his own statement, followed later. On the other hand, if l'Abbé Maillard was making use of a system already in existence, but which he was engaged in improving and extending, his gift of a set representing all the prayers to l'Abbé le Loutre is perfectly explained. Possibly the point that the characters are still known to the living Indians by the name of "character," the very name by which Father le Clercq invariably calls them, and not as "hiéroglyphes," which appears to have been l'Abbé Maillard's favourite name, may have some value, though this cannot be great since l'Abbé Maillard also designates them, though secondarily, as characters. A consideration of more weight is the fact that Father le Clercq spread the characters so widely, and his Indians learned and taught them to others so eagerly, that it is wholly unlikely their use had died out utterly in the half-century after his departure.

The evidence, therefore, seems to prove that l'Abbé Maillard

[1] Appleton's *Cyclopedia of American Biography* gives the date as "about 1738." Tanguay's *Répertoire du Clergé Canadien* gives 1741, as does the *Liste Chronologique* of 1834 (as I am informed by M. Gagnon).




This picture, which faces page 140 in the original, obviously represents the use of Father le Clercq's characters, or hieroglyphics, in teaching the prayers of the Church to the Indians. The priest may be intended to represent Father le Clercq.

This picture obviously represents the celebration of the Holy Mass beside a river which must be that of the Cross-bearer Indians, *i.e.* the Miramichi. Although inserted opposite page 146 in the original, it seems certainly intended to illustrate the incidents described on pages 194–198, in which case the priest may be intended to represent Father Jumeau.

This picture, although inserted opposite page 480 in the original, is obviously intended to illustrate the description of the moose on pages 471–472. The Indian on the left, showing badly in the reproduction, has a cross upon his breast.

This picture, inserted opposite page 506 in the original, obviously illustrates the account there given of the Indian dances. The characteristic crosses, showing that these Indians were of the Cross-bearer (Miramichi) division of the tribe, appear in several places.

ILLUSTRATIONS, DRAWN BY HAND IN INK AND APPARENTLY UNIQUE, INSERTED IN A COPY OF FATHER LE CLERCQ'S *NOUVELLE RELATION*

(This copy is described on page 45 of this volume, and the probable origin of the pictures is explained in a footnote to page 27)

*Reproduced photographically the original size*

found Father le Clercq's system still in some use among the Micmacs, and at once adopted, and substantially improved upon it, making it thus to a considerable extent his own. The anonymous editor of l'Abbé Maillard's letter above cited calls attention to the prior existence of Father le Clercq's characters, and queries whether l'Abbé Maillard, in saying "we have invented" this system, is not speaking in the name of the missionaries generally, rather than of himself in particular. This is possibly true but probably is not, for the appropriation without credit of the literary product of others was common in that day and justified in the literary morals of the time, inexcusable though we should consider it now. Father le Clercq does something of the same sort when he gives an epigrammatic remark of an Indian as said to himself, whereas he took it exactly from a much older work, even though in doing so he had to substitute a Micmac for a Montagnais sentence.[1]

To complete this subject we may now trace briefly the history of these so-called Micmac hieroglyphics (which should be known technically as Micmac ideograms), down to the present. After l'Abbé Maillard's day there is a long gap in their history, at least so far as any records I can find are concerned. A specimen belonging to the eighteenth century has been reported by Shea as existent in the British Museum,[2] but I am informed by the keeper of MS. that no such document can now be found. Another, however, undated but apparently of early date, is in the Bibliothèque Nationale, and a photograph of a portion thereof is reproduced herewith.[3] I am of opinion that this is one of l'Abbe Maillard's MS., since it shows so clearly the connecting hyphen of which he speaks. There is then a further gap in their history, and

[1] *Nouvelle Relation*, 477, and note thereto on page 277 of this volume.

[2] *Historical Magazine*, V., 1861, 292.

[3] This is the MS. mentioned on page 359 of Pilling's *Bibliography of the Algonquian Languages* (Washington, D.C., 1891). An English word *souls* occurs on the third line of the part reproduced.

they only reappear in a "Mass and Vesper Book in Micmac written in hieroglyphics by a chief of Cape Breton in 1858," mentioned in Pilling's *Bibliography*,[1] along with several others of similar sort. These manuscript books of prayers appear to have existed in considerable numbers, and some are still in possession of the Micmacs of Nova Scotia. Two of them which I have seen have a very long-used and ancient appearance, looking old enough to date back to the day of l'Abbé Maillard. A part of a page from a copy in the Library of Congress is given herewith.[2] In 1861 a brief review of the history of the characters was published by J. G. Shea,[3] who ascribes the honour of their invention to Father le Clercq, although he knew nothing as to the claims of l'Abbé Maillard. A very important feature of Shea's paper was his presentation, on the authority of Father Christian Kauder, of the Lord's Prayer, in characters, in Micmac and in English; and this copy is of such importance, as a kind of standard for any study of this subject, that it is reproduced herewith.[4] Father Kauder, however, has played a much

[1] The work mentioned in the preceding note; page 359.

[2] For the opportunity to present this page I am indebted to the kind permission and aid of the Librarian of Congress. I have also had the use of one of these books lent me by Father Pacifique.

[3] "Micmac or Recollect Hieroglyphics," in *Historical Magazine*, V., 1861, 289. Published simply under the initial S., its authorship is fixed by a reference in Shea's *First Establishment of the Faith*, I. 18. This paper was translated into Italian by Father Marcelino de Civezza, and published in 1862, and again in 1879, according to Pilling's *Bibliography*, 461 and 557.

[4] In the Introduction to his translation of Father le Clercq's *Premier Etablissement de la Foy*, published in 1881, Shea gave again an account of the invention of the hieroglyphics, accompanied by a new plate of the Lord's Prayer in character, Micmac and English. A comparison of this plate with that of 1861 (the one here reproduced) shows that the characters are from the same type, rearranged to fit the narrower page; but the work has been done so carelessly that three of the characters are dropped out altogether and one is inverted. Further, the Micmac text has been very greatly changed in spelling, and in many cases the Micmac words are applied to different characters. It only requires a comparison of the characters with the Lord's Prayer of Kauder's printed work, and of the Micmac text with Rand's Dictionaries, to show that the copy of 1861 is correct, and that of 1881 very much in error, in all of these features. Yet

larger part than this in the history of these hieroglyphics. He was born near Luxembourg in 1817, and after his ordination as priest came to the United States; he served in the ministry in various places, and after 1852 retired, because of broken health, to the Monastery at Tracadie, Nova Scotia. Here he became interested in the Micmacs and their hieroglyphics, of which he appears to have made a thorough study. And his interest was very practical, for, with the aid of influential patrons in Austria, he had a font of type cut in the characters, from which three books—a Catechism (really a book of prayers), a Book of Meditations, and a Book of Chants—were printed at Vienna in 1866.[1] These books, which are sometimes found all in one volume and sometimes separately or in different combinations, were printed almost wholly in character, only the title and dedication and the separate headings being in German, while the tables of contents are in Micmac printed in Roman letters.[2] As the accompanying reproduction will show, the characters are faithfully reproduced by the type, though in somewhat more regular and ornate form. These books are highly valued by their possessors, and are by no means common. It is said that comparatively few ever reached the Indians, for most of the consignment was lost by shipwreck. A few

unfortunately it is the copy of 1881 which has been reproduced in illustration of the subject by Mallery in his Monograph on Picture-writing, and by Pilling in his *Bibliography;* and Pilling actually attributes it to Le Clercq!

[1] The title-page of the three parts collectively is printed in both character and German. It is reproduced in facsimile in Pilling's *Bibliography*, opposite page 275. The German title reads: *Buch das gut, enthaltend den Katechismus, Betrachtung, Gesang. Die kaiserliche wie auch königliche Buchdruckerei hat es gedruckt in der kaiserlichen Stadt Wien in Oesterreich*, 1866. ("The good Book, containing the Catechism, Meditations, and Songs. The Imperial and Royal Press has printed it in the Imperial City of Vienna in Austria, 1866.")

[2] These facts are taken in part from Pilling's *Bibliography*, 375, in part from Shea's paper of 1861, and in part from my own copy of the work. My efforts to obtain, from the Trappist Monastery in Tracadie, facts about Father Kauder's later life have been fruitless. The present Father Superior has kindly informed me that neither records nor recollections of him now exist there.

of the older Indians in Prince Edward Island and Cape Breton can still read them, and some indeed can read nothing else, but reading knowledge of them has practically disappeared from Restigouche.[1] With the older generation of Indians now living their use will come to an end; for the younger generation is being taught to read and write English or French, and have prayer-books in Roman letters in their own tongue.

A second matter of distinctive interest in Father le Clercq's book is his description of the ancient worship of the Cross among the Gaspesians of Miramichi, whom he calls therefore Porte-Croix, or the Cross-bearers. It is, indeed, his favourite theme, to which he returns again and again. He alludes to it on his title-page, and thus states the matter in brief in his Dedication, after speaking of the Cross erected by Cartier on his first voyage: "Thus, by a special act of divine Providence, our Gaspesian Indians, with as much of joy as surprise, beheld in their own country a Cross like that which they were worshipping without knowledge thereof. They drew it, and wore it, religiously upon their bodies and their clothes: it presided over their councils, their voyages, and the most important affairs of their nation: their cemeteries appeared more like those of Christians than of barbarians, by reason of the number of Crosses which they placed over their tombs. In a word, they were, Madame, the Athenians of a new world, who were rendering their homage and their adoration to the Cross of an unknown God."[2] He touches upon the matter in his chapter on the origin of the Gaspesians, in

[1] According to information sent me by Father Pacifique of Restigouche, Que., Father MacDonald of Grand River, P.E.I., and Father MacPherson of Glendale, C.B. These generous correspondents have sent me much more information upon the subject than I have been able finally to use in this work.

It is of interest to add here that the Protestant missionary, Rand, made no use of the characters, and has expressed an unfavourable opinion of them (in his *Legends of the Micmacs*. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1894, 226).

[2] *Nouvelle Relation*, Dedication, v.

a connection which shows that he had in mind the possibility of the origin of this worship, like the origin of the Indians themselves, from a very ancient immigration of Christian Europeans shipwrecked on the coasts of America.[1] He comes back to it again, and naturally, when treating the religion of the Gaspesians, repeating his belief that it must have had origin in ancient Christian teachings, and adds that the Cross-bearers considered it "a mark of honour which distinguishes them from the other nations of Canada."[2] Then he devotes his entire Chapter X. to a discussion of "the Origin of the Worship of the Cross among those Gaspesians called Cross-bearers."[3] He gives first the Indian tradition, which was to the effect that in a certain time of great national calamity, some of their wisest old men saw in a dream a beautiful stranger who showed them a Cross and told them that if the nation would make the like and hold it in respect, it would bring an end of all their ills. This they did, and the result was in accord with the promise; and thereafter these Indians held the Cross in high honour. They never appeared in public without exhibiting it either in their hands, on their skin, or on their clothes; it was erected in the midst of their councils; it was given to deputies sent to other peoples as the honourable symbol and mark of their ambassadorship; the chief carried it like a rod in walking, and stood it in the most honoured place in his wigwam; and they all placed it at each end of their canoes in making their voyages. Such was the worship of the Cross by these Indians in former times according to their traditions. Father le Clercq then adds that these sentiments survived in his day, for "there is not a single one of them who does not wear it upon his clothes or upon his skin. The swaddling-clothes and the cradles of their infants are always adorned with it, while the barks of their wigwams, their canoes, and their snowshoes

[1] *Nouvelle Relation*, 41.
[2] *Op. cit.*, 170.
[3] *Op. cit.*, beginning page 172.

are all marked with it. The pregnant women work it in porcupine quills upon that part of their garment which is over the womb, in order to place their offspring under the protection of the Cross. In fact there is scarcely one of them who does not preserve very carefully in his privacy a little Cross made with wampum and beadwork, which he keeps and esteems much as we do the relics of the Saints."[1] He illustrates their high respect for the Cross by an anecdote, and then repeats his earlier statement as to the crosses over the graves in their cemeteries, adding that they also ordered it to be buried with them because "they would not be recognised by their ancestors if they had not with them the symbol and the honourable token which distinguishes the Cross-bearers from all the other Indians of New France."[2] He adds that they erected crosses also at their principal hunting and fishing localities. Our author then states, somewhat inconsistently, that when he made his first mission among these Indians they were found to have relapsed from the original devotion of their ancestors to the Cross, and they preserved only a shadow of the former customs. He found some who lacked respect for the Cross (a statement not in harmony with his earlier remark that there was not one who did not cherish a Cross in private), and they had all abandoned its use in their councils. But he, and especially his colleague, Father Jumeau, took steps to restore the ancient usage as they understood it; and a full description is given of the interesting ceremonies by which Father Jumeau "obliged them to make honourable amends to the Cross by rendering to it, through these people, a part of the honour of which the negligence of their ancestors had robbed it."[3] In connection with his first voyage to these Miramichi Indians, Father le Clercq also tells of finding a fine Cross embellished with beads set in the place of honour in a wigwam; and the owner told him that he had received it from his ancestors

[1] *Nouvelle Relation*, 181. [2] *Op. cit.*, 186. [3] *Op. cit.*, 194.

by inheritance, and that he preserved it preciously "as the honourable symbol which distinguishes the Indians of Miramichi from all the other nations of New France."[1] The first sermon of his first mission to the Cross-bearers was based upon the message of Saint Paul to the Athenians after that Apostle had seen their altar to the Unknown God. Father le Clercq explained to the Indians the mysteries of the Cross, and told them they were under special obligations to profess the faith of Jesus Christ, since it was by a special favour that they had been given this sign. They promised to follow his advice, and protested that they were sorry their ancestors had neglected so long the worship of the Cross.[2] Father le Clercq then returns to the subject of the origin of the Cross in a very important passage,[3] in which he gives the reasons why he believes it was held in veneration by these Indians before the arrival of the French in the country. The reasons are based wholly upon the testimony of the old Indians and French, confirmed by a work of Monseigneur de Saint Valier, of which more anon. Wishing to make the Indians admit that they had learned the worship of the Cross, after the arrival of the French, from missionaries who had preceded him, they pointed to an aged Indian who had seen the first ship to reach that country, and reminded our author that he had been told by this man, who knew and had heard from his ancestors, that the usage of the Cross was far older than the arrival of the French. Then they added this argument, that the Indians of Restigouche, who had been instructed by the missionaries, had not the Cross, while they of Miramichi who had the Cross had never been baptized; and therefore it could not have come from the missionaries. Our author then adds: "It will be said that this reasoning is savage. That is true, I admit, but it is not for that reason less persuasive nor less convincing. For it is a fact that the Indians of Restigouche are baptized, and that nevertheless

[1] *Nouvelle Relation*, 240. [2] *Op. cit.*, 269. [3] *Op. cit.*, 270.

they do not wear the Cross, but the figure of a salmon, which in old times they hung from the neck as the mark of honour of their country. For it is to be noted that it has always been the custom of all our Gaspesians to wear some particular figures, which are somewhat like coats of arms, to distinguish them from the other Indians, in accordance with the different places where they ordinarily live."[1] This is the last mention our author makes of the subject in his book.

Such are the statements made by Father le Clercq about the worship of the Cross by the Gaspesian Indians of the Miramichi. We consider now their significance. And first we ask whether they are confirmed by others. Only one other known work makes any mention of the matter, and that is Monseigneur de Saint Valier's *Estat Present de l'Eglise*, which gives a synoptical account substantially like that of our author, though with some differences of minor detail.[2] But it is perfectly plain from the context that his data were obtained from the same sources as Father le Clercq's, if not from Father le Clercq himself. None of the *Jesuit Relations*, or any other known work, makes any reference to the subject, so that substantially the whole matter rests upon the testimony of our author alone. And that testimony has been questioned by later writers. Father Lafitau, in his work of 1724 on the American Indians,[3] examined the whole subject, pointed out various weaknesses in our author's *Relation*, and makes much of the lack of confirmation in the *Relations* of the Jesuits, who could hardly have failed to mention so remarkable a custom had it existed. His conclusion was that the matter represented a great exaggeration of Father le Clercq's, with some relics of the labours of earlier missionaries as a basis. And as an indication of the way in which the use of the Cross

[1] *Nouvelle Relation*, 274.

[2] Monseigneur de Saint Valier's account of the matter is quoted in full in a note on page 189 of this volume.

[3] *Mœurs des Sauvages Ameriquains*, Paris, 1724, vol. II. of 12mo. ed., 133 (I. 429 of 4to. ed.).

may have arisen among the Porte-Croix Indians, he quotes a well-known statement of Father Perrault, from the *Relation* of 1635, as to the readiness with which the Indians at Cape Breton adopted the sign of the Cross and painted it on their bodies.[1] He also calls attention to the fact that the Cross is not an exclusively Christian symbol, but goes back to a far antiquity. Father Charlevoix, in his *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*,[2] considers the matter briefly, to the conclusion that our author was misled by such a use of the Cross as Father Perrault describes. The subject is discussed fully by De Roo in his *History of America before Columbus*,[3] and he concludes that the presence of the Cross among these Indians was evidence of their contact with Christian Europeans in pre-Columbian times.

Thus it appears that much diversity of view has prevailed among Father le Clercq's critics, both as to the credence to be given his statements, and the meaning of the phenomenon if true. It is of course obvious that our author, naturally predisposed to make the utmost of a discovery so remarkable, and so serviceable in his ministry, exaggerates the details, as he does for sundry other matters in his book. Yet this being allowed, I believe we can fully trust the fundamental fact that these Indians did actually hold the sign of the Cross in a respect, and made a constant use of it, which distinguished them from the remainder of the Micmac tribe. We must remember his statement that he found a Cross in a place of honour in a wigwam of these Indians when on his way to visit them

[1] *Jesuit Relations*, Thwaites' edition, VIII. 163. The passage reads thus: "They very willingly make the sign of the Cross, as they see us make it, raising their hands and eyes to Heaven and pronouncing these words, 'Jesus, Mary,' as we do,—so far that, having observed the honor we render to the Cross, these poor people paint it on their faces, chests, arms, and legs, without being asked to do so."

[2] Shea's translation, edition of 1902, II. 120.

[3] Published at Philadelphia, by J. B. Lippincott Co., 1900, I. 441, 610, and II. 274, 278. The author, on page 448, cites several other writers who have examined the matter.

for the first time, and that he says they marked the Cross upon their various articles of daily use. We cannot reject such direct statements as these without accusing our author of a deliberate mendacity for which there is certainly no other evidence. The existence of the Cross among these Indians being granted, there are two possible explanations of its origin, aside of course from the Indian explanation, which is not to be seriously considered. The first possibility is that which is advocated by our author and by De Roo, viz. that the existence of the Cross at Miramichi was a relic of Christian teaching, either in very early times or else by our author's immediate predecessors, for he had such predecessors despite the denial of the Indians.[1] Against this is the very great, even though not logically conclusive, difficulty of explaining why this single division of the Micmac tribe and no other should have the sign. The other explanation, which seems to have been overlooked by all students of the subject, is incidentally suggested by our author himself when he says that the Indians of Restigouche do not wear the Cross, but the figure of a salmon, which in old times they hung from the neck as the mark of honour of their country. And then he adds that it has always been the custom of the Gaspesians to wear some particular figure which was somewhat like a coat of arms to distinguish them from the other Indians, according to the places where they ordinarily live. Again and again our author, in speaking of the Cross among these Indians, points out that it was a special mark of honour, distinguishing those of the Miramichi from all others. The Cross, therefore, according to our author himself, was the distinguishing totem sign of the Miramichi division, or clan, of the Micmacs, precisely as the salmon was of the Restigouche division ; and all of the facts our author gives are in full harmony with this explanation, which I believe is correct. But it still remains to be explained whence they drew this

[1] As considered in a note on page 192 of this volume.

sign. If a totem sign it could not have been originally the Christian symbol, since it must have been long aboriginal. It is true the Cross is not necessarily a Christian emblem, since it was not only known in times long pre-Christian, but was widely employed by the aboriginal American Indians in various significances and connections.[1] But totem signs, among these Indians at least, were always animals, and that of our Miramichi Indians must have been something which, when drawn in outline and more or less conventionalised according to custom, fell somewhat into the form of a cross.[2] What animal this was I do not yet know, but it is possible that it signified a wild goose or other waterfowl in full flight, the appearance of which, when seen against the sky, is suggestive of a cross form. This view has a certain support in the fact that the large waterfowl are as characteristic a feature of the lower part of the Miramichi, especially of the great sand flats and shallows near its mouth, as the salmon is of the Restigouche.[3] Probably, however, it was not the

[1] The pre-Christian use of the Cross is discussed for the old world by Baring-Gould in his *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages*, 341, while its wide use by the Indians of aboriginal America is treated in synopsis in Brinton's *Myths of the New World*, 3rd edition, 113, in the *Handbook of American Indians* (Washington, 1907), 365, and in the *Reports of the Bureau of Ethnology*, Washington, for 1880–81, 268, for 1887–88, 479 (mentions Father le Clercq), for 1888–89, 724.

[2] A striking case of Indian conventionalisation of an animal to an exact cross (in this case the animal was a dragon-fly) is given by Mallery in his *Picture-writing of the American Indians*, 725, and an example of a totem sign, obviously an animal, but somewhat like a cross, is contained near the bottom of a plate in Baxter's *Pioneers of France in New England*, 118. According to the order of names on that plate this is a Huron sign, though the Micmac sign immediately follows it.

[3] I have, of course, made efforts to determine the knowledge among the living Micmacs of Miramichi as to the totems of their ancestors. The subject is beset with difficulties, since such knowledge is fast vanishing from among them. But I have been told by Lemey Renou, one of the most reliable Indians of Miramichi, that the Indians of that river in old times had three totem signs —those of the Main Southwest had the sturgeon, those of the Little Southwest had a beaver, while those of the Northwest "used the mark of a man with a bow and arrow drawn, done in bead-work on the clothes and marked on to the canoes." This leads one to ask whether the drawn bow and arrow could

original totem sign, cross-like though that may have been, which Father le Clercq found in use by these Indians, but the totem cross modified by Christian influence. For it must inevitably have happened that the influence of the Christian teaching they received would have tended to make these Indians merge the appearance and attributes of the Christian Cross with their own. And this must have occurred even aside from the possibility, or probability, that some of our author's missionary predecessors, like our author himself and like other missionaries in all times and places, had seen the advantage of utilising this pagan symbol for Christian purposes, and had thus made use of it with a result of transforming the pagan totem into the Christian Cross. Therefore in its origin as a sub-tribal totem sign, originally the conventionalised figure of some animal, later modified, whether unconsciously or deliberately, under the influence of Christian teachings, we have, I believe, the natural, consistent, and correct explanation of the Cross which Father le Clercq found among the Indians of Miramichi.

A third feature of marked interest in the book is the presence of numerous Micmac words, names, and phrases, most of which, as the footnotes will show, are readily comparable with modern Micmac by reference to the invaluable Dictionaries of Dr. Silas Rand.[1] It will be of interest, to some philologists at least, if these expressions are collected together, and they here follow, with the pages on which they are respectively found. Most of them show variations in spelling when repeated, but I have given only the first form ; and many of them are badly misprinted, as the notes explain.

have suggested the sign of the Cross, though I set no store by this idea, nor do I place much reliance upon this information. The salmon is still known to have been the sign of the Restigouche Indians.

[1] These expressions were partially collected, with comments, by J. G. Shea in a note entitled "Language of the Gaspesians," in the *Historical Magazine*, V. 284. Though published anonymously, the authorship is fixed by a reference in another article by Shea cited in a note on page 30 of this volume.

matachias, 45, 58, 60, 61, 63, 68.
Ouahiche, 47, 331, 332, 336, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347.
Tissaouhianne, 59.
tabagannes, 70.
cacamos, 114.
*Nigaiou*, 119.
*Kignamotinoer* ou *Kateguenne*, 130, 148, 151, 534.
*akahie*, 147, 148, 538.
*Mouhinne*, *Mouhinchiche*, 152.
*Paniah*, *Nibk*, *Taoüak*, *Kesic*, 158.
*Tkours*, 159.
*Bonodemeguiche*, ponamon, 160.
*kir*, 163.
*Smagnis*, 164.
*Koucdedaoui*, 164, 247, 264, 265.
*Ho*, *ho*, *ho* (or Hé, hé, hé), 168, 179, 264, 527.
Ejougouloumoüet, 233, 234, 238, 239, 257.
Quioudo, 272.
Papkootparout, 310, 316, 319, 320, 321, 324, 325, 327.
Ledelstaganne, 318, 324, 508.
Bouhinne, 336, 339, 517.
*Emkadoui*, 336.
*Tchougis*, 338, 341.
Kenibeki, 365.
Medousaoüek, 405.
*Ndegouche*, *apche mou*, *adadaseou*, *apche mou oüahgahi*, *apche mou kedoukichtonebilchi*, 414.
*Oagando hi guidanne*, 473.
Pactagane, 474.
*Tahoè messet kogoüar pajo ne daoüi dogoüil mkobit*, 477.
Metauh, Oüaspous, 490.
caribous, 491.
*Tahoè nkameramon ignemoulo ; nkameramon achkou oüiguidex*, 500, 541.
*Chigoüidah*, *ouikbarlno*, ouragan, 503.
Chagat, 508.
*Tamahoè*, 516.
*Ouè*, *ovè*, *ovè*, 521.
*Ouce choüen tahoè*, 546.
*Iarbasou*, 537.
*Koutche*, *kitche chibar*, *chaktou*, *baguisto skiginouidex*, 547, 549, 552.
*Nemidoüades*, 554.

In addition to these words, Father le Clercq uses three others of American-Indian, though not Micmac, origin, namely, sagamité, 89, 264 ; boucannée, 93, 118; and Quinquajou, 343, 347, 491.

Such in substance is all that I have been able to glean concerning Father Chrestien le Clercq and his Gaspesian book. Though not very much, 'tis enough to show that the man is worthy of our honour and his work of our praise.

# BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE *NOUVELLE RELATION DE LA GASPESIE*

By VICTOR HUGO PALTSITS
State Historian of New York

In presenting a bibliographical account of Le Clercq's *Nouvelle Relation de la Gaspesie*, we are fortunate in being able to note the existence of three distinct issues. Happily, all three issues are in the remarkable American-Indian collection of Wilberforce Eames, Esq., of Brooklyn, N.Y., and he has most generously placed them at our disposal for as long a time as was found desirable for this inquiry, and our facsimiles have been made from his copies.

Hitherto, American bibliographies have described only the original issue of 1691. That issue is by no means uncommon. Our conspectus of extant copies is not intended as a definitive census, but is none the less the fullest record ever given. The results are deduced from an extended inquiry, prosecuted by correspondence, personal examination, or otherwise. We give also exact facsimiles of the three title-pages and a characteristic page of the text.

## ISSUE OF 1691

For the title-page, see the facsimile.

*Collation:* Title, verso blank, one leaf; dedication, "A MADAME | LA PRINCESSE | D'EPINOY." | , pp. (24); "*Extrait du Privilege du Roy*", "donné à Paris le 30. Decembre 1690," with registration dated "*le 5. Janvier* 1691," and date of printing "*pour la premiere fois, le vingtiéme Avril*

# NOUVELLE RELATION DE LA GASPESIE,

QUI CONTIENT

Les Mœurs & la Religion des Sauvages Gaſpeſiens Porte-Croix, adorateurs du Soleil, & d'autres Peuples de l'Amerique Septentrionale, dite le Canada.

DEDIE'E A MADAME LA PRINCESSE D'EPINOY,

*Par le Pere* CHRESTIEN LE CLERCQ, *Miſſionnaire Recollet de la Province de Saint Antoine de Pade en Artois, & Gardien du Convent de Lens.*

A PARIS,
Chez AMABLE AUROY, ruë Saint Jacques, à l'Image S. Jerôme, attenant la Fontaine S. Severin.

M. DC. XCI.
*AVEC PRIVILEGE DU ROY.*

1691," pp. (2); text (21 chapters), pp. 1–572. Most copies agree with this collation, but a smaller number have a "TABLE | DES CHAPITRES | contenus en ce Livre." | , pp. (4). This table is quite evidently an afterthought and an insert. The waterlines of the paper of these two leaves run lengthwise (from top to bottom of the printed pages), whilst in the rest of the volume they run crosswise or horizontally. The table is not bound in uniformly; sometimes it follows the title-page, or is between the "Epitre" and "Privilege," or precedes the first page of the text, or is found at the end of the volume. The Lenox copy, in the New York Public Library, had these leaves laid in loose until a few years ago, when they were pasted in at the end of the text to preserve them against loss or fraying. We have also found these leaves with the outer edges stained and uncut in a copy of the issue of 1692, which is otherwise trimmed and gilt-edged.

*Signatures:* ã in eight, ẽ in four, ĩ in two, A—Aaa alternating from eights to fours, Bbb in two; the table has two leaves without signature, has no fixed location, but logically would best follow the title-page.

Page 238 is misprinted 328, and 328 is erroneously numbered 228. The heading of p. 106 appears as "*Novuelle Relation.*" We find also broken letters in the headings of pp. 227, 407, 457, and 547. All of these vagaries are found in the three issues, which have also an identical colophon at the foot of p. 572, viz.: "De l'Imprimerie de LAURENT | RONDET." | Le Clercq ceded his rights of "Privilege" to Amable Auroy, the bookseller.

*Copies:* The following libraries have copies with the table: British Museum; Boston Public Library; Harvard College Library (Francis Parkman's copy); New York Historical Society; New York Public Library (Lenox copy); Wisconsin Historical Society; and those of Philéas Gagnon, of Quebec, and Frederick L. Gay, of Brookline, Mass. Copies without

the table are in the Bibliothèque Nationale; American Geographical Society; Boston Athenæum; Harvard College Library (second copy); John Carter Brown Library; Library of Congress; Library of Parliament, Ottawa; Library of the Legislature of Quebec; Laval University, Quebec; Newberry Library; New York Public Library (Astor copy); New York State Library, and the private collections of the late E. Dwight Church, of Brooklyn, N.Y., Wilberforce Eames, of Brooklyn, N.Y., Dr. William F. Ganong, and the Hon. Peter A. Porter, of Niagara Falls, N.Y. Copies, of uncertain status as to the table, are also in possession of Edward E. Ayer, of Chicago, M. L. W. Sicotte, of Montreal, and the libraries of l'École Normale de Jacques Cartier and of Laval University, both in Montreal.

*Prices:* At the Field sale (1872), a copy with the table brought $5; the Brinley copy (1879) was bid as high as $21; the Murphy copy (1884) fetched $5.75; the Barlow copy (1890) realised $27.50, and the Bourinot copy, without table, sold in 1906 for $21. From these and other memoranda, the auction record seems probably below an average of twenty-five dollars. Naturally, the booksellers, who are themselves the principal bidders at auction, have demanded higher prices. Leclerc, of Paris, asked 140 francs in 1878; Dufossé, of Paris, 90 francs in 1887; Chadenat, of Paris, from 1889 to 1906, priced copies without the table and in varying conditions, all the way from 80 to 150 francs; Stevens, Son & Stiles, of London, in 1899 and 1907 offered an identical copy at £8, and Dodd, Mead & Company, of New York, priced a copy in 1908 at $50.

## ISSUE OF 1692.

For the title-page, see the facsimile. This title is entirely independent, has not the author's name, and was printed for Thomas Amaulry, bookseller of Lyons. We have here the

# NOUVELLE RELATION DE LA GASPESIE,

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Imprimé à Paris, & ſe vend

A LYON,

Chez THOMAS AMAULRY,

ruë Merciere, au Mercure Galant.

M. DC. XCII.

same status as in the case of Le Clercq's *Premier Etablissement de la Foy*. That work in two volumes was issued first at Paris by Amable Auroy, in 1691; but in 1692, Thomas Amaulry brought out a reissue at Lyons, under the title of *Histoire des Colonies Françoises*.

The only change is the title-page; otherwise the collation is in agreement with the issue of 1691, and it has the same mispaging and other vagaries. It is not probable that Auroy put out an issue in 1692, as inferred by Faribault many years ago. We have taken note of three copies of Amaulry's issue, each of which has the table, but again variously placed.

*Copies:* Private collection of Wilberforce Eames, of Brooklyn, N.Y., which is the Stevens copy, mentioned below; Historical Society of Pennsylvania; the F. L. Gay copy, mentioned below.

*Prices:* Chadenat, of Paris, in March–April, 1895, offered a copy for 120 francs. It was bound by Champs in levant morocco, tooled, and had also inserted the following four interesting pen drawings, of the end of the seventeenth century, viz.: (1) Indiens apprenant à lire sur un tableau contenant des caractères spéciaux à leur langue; (2) Indiens assistant à la messe dite au bord d'une rivière, canots, etc.; (3) Scène de chasse à l'original; (4) Scène de danse. A copy of this issue was sold in the Pratt sale, April, 1899, for $30, having four extra drawings inserted. Apparently this is the identical copy offered by Chadenat, mentioned above. This Pratt copy was sold again, December 5, 1901, at Libbie's, Boston, for $25, and again, on April 13, 1910, for $125, when it was bought by Mr. Frederick L. Gay, who has most kindly allowed us its use for the reproduction of the illustrations given opposite page 28 of this volume. In October, 1899, Henry Stevens, Son & Stiles, of London, offered in their catalogue, No. LXVIII., for £11, 10s., a copy bound by W. Pratt in red crushed levant morocco, but did not sell it. In 1907 it was offered anew in their

catalogue of "Rare Americana," item 422, for £10, and was purchased by Mr. Eames. It is a beautiful copy of this excessively rare issue.

## ISSUE OF 1758.

For the title-page, see the facsimile. This issue is a publisher's "trick," and the title is a curiosity. It is denoted as "NOUVELLE EDITION"; has the author's name, but singularly retains the name and business address of Amable Auroy, as in the original issue of 1691. The "Privilege" leaf is omitted, because the data it contained would have revealed the incongruity. There is no table. In every other respect we have here the original book issued at Paris in 1691, and at Lyons in 1692, with the vagaries and Rondet's colophon.

*Copies:* The only copy known to us is owned by Wilberforce Eames, of Brooklyn, N.Y., who purchased it from Philéas Gagnon, of Quebec, in January, 1908. Mr. Gagnon has informed us that he bought it from a bookseller of Munich, Germany. A good copy of the very rare map: "Carte Generalle de la Nouvelle France," 1691, is inserted in this copy. This map really is foreign to the book, but belongs to Le Clercq's *Premier Etablissement de la Foy.*

# NOUVELLE RELATION DE LA GASPESIE,

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NOUVELLE EDITION.

*À PARIS,*
Chez AMABLE AUROY, rue S. Jacques, à l'Image S. Jerôme, attenant la Fontaine S. Severin.

M. DCC LVIII.
*AVEC PRIVILEGE DU ROY.*

# NEW
# RELATION
OF
# GASPESIA

CONTAINING

The Customs and Religion of the Gaspesian Cross-bearer Indians, Worshippers of the Sun, and of other Peoples of North America, called also Canada

DEDICATED TO

MADAME LA PRINCESSE D'EPINOY

*By Father* Chrestien le Clercq, *Recollect Missionary of the Province of Saint Anthony of Padua in Artois, and Superior of the Monastery of Lens*

PARIS

At Amable Auroy's, Rue Saint Jacques, at the Image of S. Jerome, adjoining the Fountain of S. Severin

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MDCXCI

*With the King's License*

## [i] *To* MADAME LA PRINCESSE D'EPINOY

MADAME,

BE not surprised if I take the liberty to present to you, and to give to the Public under the favourable [ii] auspices of your illustrious name, this *New Relation of Gaspesia*. For that country is by rights in your debt, and it is the part equally of its duty and its gratitude to offer you, through one of its missionaries, whatsoever it has of religious importance before God and of practical consequence before men. Thus it may discharge to-day those just obligations in which, for more than a century past, it has been indebted to the piety of your ancestors, for having been brought under the laws of the Church and of the greatest Monarch of the universe, through the devotion [iii] of their zeal for the service of the State and of Religion.[1]

In fact, MADAME, a truthful history teaches us that Monsieur Philippe Chabot, Count of Buransais and of Chargny, Seignior of Brion and High Admiral of France, who lived in high honour and glory in the reign of Francis the First, wishing to open up ways to the preachers of the Faith in a land where it had never been proclaimed, generously gave to Jacques Cartier, along with his commissions,

[1] The Princesse d'Epinoy, to whom Father le Clercq dedicates this work, was Pelagie Chabot-Rohan, who married, 11th April 1668, Alexandre Guillaume de Melun, Prince d'Epinoy. She was a widow at the time our author wrote, and she died at Versailles 18th August 1698. The principal facts about her life, as well as her relationship to Philippe Chabot (mentioned in the next paragraph of the text) may be traced through Père Anselme's *Histoire . . . de la Maison Royale de France* (Edition of 1868, IV. 532, and elsewhere).

three [iv] ships, which were equipped at his own cost and expense and provided with everything needful to further the first discoveries of the country, as well as to lay the foundations of that flourishing colony of New France now obviously so well established in Canada. Infusing into the heart of this famous navigator a part of that noble ardour, so common and so natural in all members of your house, for magnifying and extending the glory of *JESUS CHRIST* and of our Kings, he commanded him to erect there the Cross, the Fleur-de-Lys and that [v] celebrated inscription which acquired for the Kingdom of France more than two thousand leagues of those vast countries. It was the year 1535, and the sixth of July, when it appeared for the first time in Gaspesia, and a few days later upon the banks and shores of the River of Saint Laurence, in these words: *Franciscus Primus, Dei gratiâ, Rex Francorum, regnat.*[1]

Thus it is, MADAME, that all France is indebted to your noble house for the conquest of this new world, and thus, by a special act of [vi] divine Providence, our Gaspesian Indians, with as much of joy as surprise, beheld in their own country a Cross like that which they were worshipping without knowledge thereof. They drew it, and wore it, religiously upon their bodies and their clothes; it presided over their councils, their voyages, and the most important affairs of their nation; their cemeteries appeared more like those of Christians than of barbarians, by reason of the number of Crosses which they placed over their tombs. In a word, they [vii] were, MADAME, the Athenians of a new world, who were rendering their homage and their adoration to the Cross of an

[1] *Francis the First, by the grace of God, King of the French, reigns.* This sentence would have made a far stronger inscription than the one which Cartier actually used, for our author is in error on this point as in others relating to this matter. As all of the accounts of Cartier's voyages agree, it was in 1534, and on July 24, that Cartier erected the cross at Gaspé, while its inscription, which was displayed only once, consisted in these words: *Vive le Roy de France.*

unknown God at that very time when the Princes of Epinoy and of Melun, along with Saint Louis and our other Kings of France, were nobly undertaking their most celebrated journeys to the Holy Land in order to redeem it from the shame in which it lay among those infidel nations, and to make it adored by all the world.

Animated by the spirit of Saint Paul, these noble men, [viii] MADAME, wished, like this Apostle of *JESUS CHRIST*, no other glory than that which they eagerly sought in the Cross of the Son of God ; and, counting as nothing both the great number of victories which they had won over the enemies of the Faith, and also those heroic feats of arms which had won for them the surname of *Carpenters*, because of the victorious power of their arms and the weight of their blows, they held it as the highest of honours to go on the Crusades with the bravest of the [ix] Kingdom. Before all the world they displayed this sacred sign of our salvation as the shining mark of their Christianity. They made their wills and put their affairs in order before setting out for the conquest of the Holy Land, since they had the intention to die there as martyrs, or else to establish the reign of *JESUS CHRIST*. They were Eli's who died every moment of regret at seeing this Ark of the Covenant in the power of those indomitable Philistines. And finally they desired that the Cross should be engraved upon their sepulchres with the arms of your [x] house, in order to indicate to all posterity that they placed themselves even after death under the protection of the Cross of the Son of God, whose interests, during their life, they had maintained with so much zeal and glory.

I should exceed, MADAME, the limits of a Dedication, and I recognise with pleasure that I should need large volumes, if I were now to recall the glorious and triumphant memory of those illustrious heroes : the antiquity of their nobility, more ancient even than the birth of Christianity [xi] in our

France, according to the report of Gregory of Tours, who makes it descend from that famous Aurelian who arranged the marriage of Sainte Clothilde and King Clovis with so much sagacity, judgment, and prudence, that this great prince gave him the County of Melun with its dependencies, as a reward for this important service: those stately and great unions of your house with crowned heads, and with the most noble and august families of Europe: the profound erudition of so [xii] great a number of learned prelates, whose orthodox teachings have given lustre to the church of *JESUS CHRIST*, and have scattered the darkness and errors which were like to ruin or corrupt it: the austere virtue and the sanctity of so many abbesses who have founded, reformed, and sanctified the cloisters: and that piety and that pity, so natural and so obvious through the foundation of such a number of monasteries, churches, chapels, oratories, and hospitals, endowed by the property of your ancestors, and sustained, MADAME, by your own [xiii] generosity, at Bethune, at La Bassée, at Abbeville, at Baugé, and in several other places of the Kingdom.

I should never end, MADAME, and I even venture to say, with all that frankness and candour with which my native land endows me, it would be useless, to recite here in detail the deeds and heroic virtues of your illustrious ancestors, because it appears that Nature and Grace have happily agreed to unite in your own person everything which they both [xiv] had granted your ancestors of nobility, of vivacity of spirit, of judgment, of wisdom, of courage, of virtue, of piety, of faith, and of religion. These appear to-day with so much brilliancy in your illustrious person that you yourself attract no fewer blessings than Mademoiselle de Melun, your sister, has received in living and in dying in the odour of sanctity, and in the practice of those loftiest virtues of Christianity, upon which you take pleasure in regulating and modelling [xv] all the actions of your life.

Indeed, if it were permissible for me to make such a challenge as that of the sage referring to the virtuous woman, it would be this, MADAME, to find one who could rival you in that greatness of soul and zeal which attaches you inviolably to the interests of God, of religion, and of the state ; in that loftiness and breadth of universal genius which permits you to think of nothing but what is noble ; in that charity without limit which renders your heart [xvi] sensitive to the miseries of others, opens your hands with the liberality and profusion of your great riches in order to relieve them, makes of your house an asylum and refuge for the afflicted, pleads with King and with ministers on behalf of the unfortunate, renders easy and ready the access to your presence both for the great and the lowly, leads you to do good to all people, inspires in you a humility without abasement, and a holy pride without arrogance, and gives you, in fact, a heart conformable to that of God. It is these virtues which have won you now so [xvii] justly, the esteem of the greatest of Monarchs, and the veneration of the Court.

Let not your modesty, MADAME, take offence. Enemy of flattery and of vanity as you are, it is known that you found your greatness only upon that which can render you pleasing to him who exalts a soul so Christian as yours just in so far as it humbles itself in his presence. But, indeed, even if, in order to please you, I would pass in silence the little I have just said as to all those rare advantages of Nature [xviii] and of Grace which you possess, they would none the less be known by all the world through the reflections and visible impressions which you have made of them in the hearts and in the spirits of Messieurs the Princes your sons, who have distinguished themselves in their first campaign with such valour, bravery, judgment, and wisdom, that the King has been pleased to entrust to the courage of Monsieur le Prince d'Epinoy, at the age of eighteen years, the Regiment of Picardy, and to favour Monsieur his brother with a

company [xix] of cavalry, in order to recognise and to encourage the valour of these two young heroes, who arouse such high expectations among all the brave men of the Kingdom.

Worthy of the choice of *LOUIS LE GRAND*, and sacredly animated by the all-consuming zeal of their noble ancestors for Religion and for the State, they have been pursuing glory, and following Monseigneur into Germany in support of those same interests. They are doing their part to-day in Flanders and upon the Rhine in order to be everywhere the defenders [xx] of our altars, and to revive the memory of the courage and the zeal of the Williams and the Adams de Melun, and of the other heroes of Christianity, who have stopped the progress of the infidels, subdued the rebellion of heretics, and vanquished everywhere the enemies of France.

Filled then as I am by sentiments of profound respect for the virtue of a mother so glorious, and charmed by the zeal and high spirit of children so worthy of their birth, what more ought I to do, MADAME, after having presumed [xxi] to dedicate to you this *New Relation of Gaspesia*, to give it to the public under your auspices? I can only offer to God my prayers, my vows, and my sacrifices, for the sake of imploring him urgently to turn abundantly the fulness of his blessings upon your illustrious person, and to preserve Messieurs the Princes your children in the dangers, perils, and hazards of war, to which the intrepidity of their courage, seconded by a true zeal for Religion, exposes them every moment on behalf of the Catholic Religion and in the service of the [xxii] first, the most august, and the most religious Monarch of Christendom.

I find myself, MADAME, all the more bound to these rightful duties for the reason that I have the honour to be not only Superior of the Recollects of Lens, who have the good fortune to preach the gospel of *JESUS CHRIST* to

your people of the principality of Epinoy, but also Superior of a community as strict and zealous for religious perfection as that of your nuns of La Bassée, of which you are the foundress. [xxiii] We ought all of us together to recognise before God at the foot of His altars, the mighty obligations that we owe to you and to all of your illustrious family. In the hope that your goodness will be pleased to receive this little attempt at a history of Gaspesia as favourably as it received myself when I had the honour, on my arrival in Paris, to testify to you, as I do again now with all possible respect, that I am and [xxiv] shall be all my life, by inclination as by obligation,

MADAME,

Your very humble, and very obedient servant, Friar Chrestien Le Clercq, Recollect Missionary of the Province of Artois, and Superior of the Convent of Lens.

## [xxv] *Extract from the King's License.*

BY Grace and License of the King, given at Paris the 30th December 1690, signed, by the King in his Council, MENESTREL; It is permitted to the Reverend Father CHRESTIEN LE CLERCQ, Recollect Missionary, Superior of the Convent of Lens in Artois, to have printed by whomsoever he pleases, a book entitled *New Relation of Gaspesia, containing the Customs and the Religion of the Gaspesian Cross-bearer Indians, worshippers of the Sun, and other peoples of North America, called also Canada*, during the time and duration of eight consecutive years, counting from the day on which the printing of the said book shall be finished for the first time. And it is forbidden to all printers and booksellers [xxvi] to print, sell, and issue it, under any pretext whatsoever, even with a foreign imprint, or otherwise, without the consent of the said applicant or of his assigns, under penalty of fifteen hundred livres fine, payable by each of those contravening, of confiscation of all the copies, and of all costs, damages, and interest, as is more fully specified in the said License.

*Registered in the book of the Community of Booksellers and Printers of Paris, the 5th January* 1691, *according to the decree of Parliament of 8th April*, 1653, *and that of the Privy Council of the King, of the 27th February*, 1665.

*Signed* AUBOÜYN, *Syndic.*

The said Reverend Father has ceded his license to AMABLE AUROY, Merchant Bookseller.

*Finished printing for the first time the twentieth of April* 1691.

[i]

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# [1] NEW RELATION OF GASPESIA

## CHAPTER I

### *On Gaspesia in General*

GASPESIA, or Gaspé, whence our Indians derive their origin and name of Gaspesians, has ever been a renowned and conspicuous place. Such it was among the nations of North America,[1] [2] both on account of the ancient and habitual residence which the first leaders and chiefs,[2] the kings and rulers of these peoples, have established there, in the course of several centuries, as the seat of their empire, and of such a government as can be found in Canada among the barbarians of New France, and also because of the bloody wars, and the fury of their victorious and triumphant arms, which they formerly carried even to the homes of the Eskimaux and of the other Indians who live along the banks of the great River Saint Lawrence. Not only this, but it is also very important to us, as much on account of the fishery for cod, which is made there every year, as because of the mine of [3] lead, which was discovered there some years ago, but which, nevertheless, has had unfortunately to be abandoned after a very great expense had been incurred.

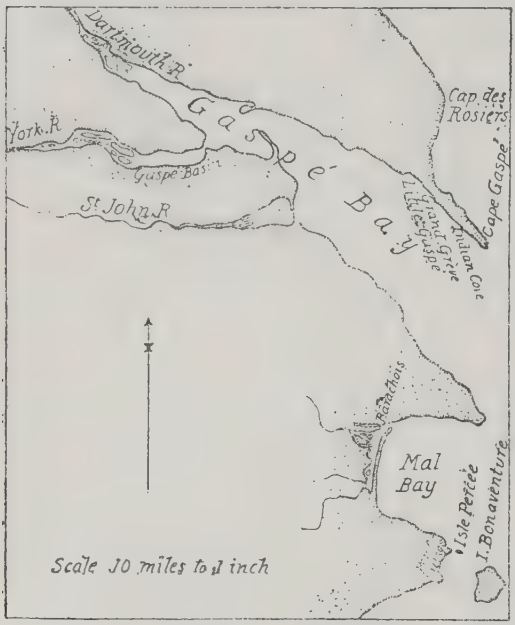
[1] This opening paragraph is the clumsiest piece of composition in our author's entire book. It shows marks of haste, and I have no doubt that it was added, or at all events rearranged, in connection with the interpolation, at the last moment, of Father Jumeau's letter, which begins at page 7. Apparently the book began originally with the paragraph which is now the second.

[2] This and the immediately preceding words read in the original *les Chefs et les Capitaines*. Throughout his work our author uses the word *Chef* for a leading person of any grade, and therefore it can mean either the head of a family or of a settlement, or even a "chief" in our sense. But to designate the chiefs in particular he uses always the word *Capitaines*.

This mine has not proven sufficiently rich to yield the profit and advantage which was hoped. This is, perhaps, so far as I was able to judge of the matter when I was in that place, because the miners who were sent there from France have sought to find at the opening of the mine the vein[1] which they could have found much more easily at the foot of the rock concealing this metal, of which the nature approaches nearer, or at least as near, that of tin as that of lead.[2] [4]

[1] The word in the original is *pillon*, which is an obvious misprint for *filon*, a mining term meaning "vein."

[2] Deposits of lead ores, not, however, extensive enough for profitable mining, are well-known at Gaspé at several localities from Little Gaspé and Grand Grève to Indian Cove; and it was doubtless the former locality, the most important of all, to which our author refers. They are mentioned in the Reports of the Geological Survey of Canada (*Report* for 1880–82, 15 DD. and Vol. IV. 77 K.), and in Professor Clarke's works, his *Sketches of Gaspé*, 39, and his *Early Devonic History*, 42. In saying that the metal was tin rather than lead, our author is mistaken, though he is in agreement with the belief of the Company of New France in 1653, when it reserved these "tin" mines from the grant made that year to Nicolas Denys (*The Champlain Society's Edition of Denys*, 58). Denys also mentions the mine and makes the error of calling it antimony (*Op. cit.*, 227; and *Description*, I. 236). It was no doubt this mine which was visited, and unfavourably reported, in 1665 by Father Bailloquet and some miners (*Jesuit Relations*, Thwaites' edition, XLIX. 171). A very interesting account of an attempt to work these mines in the year 1665 is contained in the *Journal du Corsaire Jean Doublet de Honfleur*, edited by Charles Bréard, Paris, 1887, 33. This, no doubt, was the attempt to which our author refers.



Gaspesia, or otherwise Gaspé,[1] is a country full of mountains, of woods, and of rocks, the soil of which is wholly sterile and unfruitful. In a word, it is a bay, which lies at the entrance of the river Saint Lawrence in the latitude of forty-

[1] This important and pleasing place-name makes its first appearance in 1542 in the "Routier" or "Course" of Jean Alphonse, where it occurs in the phrase *Bay of Molues or Gaspé* (Baxter's translation in his *Memoir of Jacques Cartier*, New York, 1906, 251). It reappears in Champlain's *Sauvages* of 1603 as *Gachepé* and *Gachepay*, and in his *Voyages* of 1613 as *Gaspé*, which form has been in constant use from that time to the present, and is now applied to a Cape, a Bay, a Basin, a County, and a District. The earliest attempt to explain its origin appears to be that of Joseph Hamel, who, in 1833, derived it from *Kespèque*, meaning "Bout de la pointe de terre" (*Journals of the House of Assembly of Lower Canada*, 1835-36, Appendix BB). This explanation was adopted by Dawson in 1858, who wrote that it means as nearly as possible "Land's end" (*Canadian Naturalist*, III. 323). The same explanation was given, apparently quite independently, in 1866, by Father Vetromile, who derives it from *Gachepè* or *Kech'pi*, meaning "the end" (*The Abnakis and their History*, New York, 1866, 46), though I set no great store by his authority since he promulgated many errors. Another explanation was given in 1870 by l'Abbé Laverdière, who cites l'Abbé Maurault as deriving it from an Abenaki word *Katsepi8i*, meaning "separate," "separated from the mainland," in description of the prominent rock, called the Forillon, which formerly stood at the extremity of Cape Gaspé (*Œuvres de Champlain*, 68). This explanation must have been communicated by l'Abbé Maurault to l'Abbé Laverdière, since it does not occur, so far as I can find, in the former's only published book, *Histoire des Abenakis* (Sorel, 1866). L'Abbé Laverdière's great authority has led to the frequent repetition of this explanation, but the evidence on its behalf is badly grounded and for these reasons: first, l'Abbé Maurault, as I know from much study of that subject, was very superficial in his explanation of place-names; second, his Abenaki philology cannot be transferred to Micmac territory; and third, there is not, so far as I can find, in the extensive Micmac Dictionaries of Rand, any word which comes anywhere near to the form required by this explanation. Recently, however, and again apparently quite independently, the interpretation of Hamel, Dawson and Vetromile, has been reaffirmed by Father Pacifique, a missionary among the Micmacs of Restigouche (in Rouillard's *Noms géographiques . . . empruntés aux langues sauvages*, Quebec, 1906, 35); he makes it mean "end" or "extremity," and cites the fact that Yarmouth, the land's end of Nova Scotia, is called in Micmac *Gespogoitg* (written by Rand *Kespoogwit*, meaning "Land's End," in his *Micmac-English Dictionary*, Charlottetown, 1902, 74), while Cape Breton is called *Gespesaocg*, and this explanation receives a certain confirmation from the fact that the Micmacs, according to Father Pacifique, formerly considered their country as a giant having his head at Cape Breton, and his feet at Yarmouth and Gaspé. Rand's *Dictionary*, above cited (74), gives *Kespak* as meaning

eight degrees, and is four to five leagues in breadth, and six to seven in depth. It ends in a very beautiful basin, and in three rivers very full of fish, which branch far within the country. It is distant only seven leagues from Isle Percée, which is not, as some imagine, an island capable of affording homes to residents, but only a very rough rock, everywhere precipitous, of an extraordinary height, and of a surprising abruptness. This rock [5] is also pierced open to such a degree in three or four separate places, that boats are accustomed to pass, with masts all up and under full sail, through the principal one of these openings. It is from this circumstance that it takes its name of Isle Percée,[1] although in fact it is only partially an island, or a peninsula. One can easily make the circuit around it on foot when the tide is low,

"the end," and *Kespeā* as meaning "I am the last one"; and on the same page are several words beginning *kespa* or *kespe*, which has the signification of "last" or "end." Taking all the facts into consideration, therefore, I think it wholly probable that the explanation of Hamel, Dawson, Vetromile, and Pacifique is correct. Since *Gaspe* or *Kespe* appears usually as an inseparable prefix, it is quite possible that *Gaspé* is an abbreviated form of a longer word, perhaps of *Kespoogwit*, the same as for Yarmouth; but in any case it seems plain that the word means "end" or "extremity." It is, therefore, no doubt descriptive of the geographical position of the place in relation to the territory of the Micmacs. We have no data as to whether the word was applied by the Indians simply to the Cape, or to a larger region inclusive of Gaspé Bay, but it seems most probable that they used it for the region or bay, which was the last place in their territory in which a part of their tribe resided.

At the same time another possibility must receive consideration. The word goes back to Alphonse, and therefore practically to Cartier's time. Now the Indians whom Cartier found in Gaspé are supposed to have been not Micmacs, but Huron-Iroquois. Hence the name Gaspé, which must have been taken in the first place from them, may be a word of their tongue, and not Micmac. If the reader is curious as to other explanations which have been given, though I believe they are all without any reliable historical basis, he will find them in Vetromile, *op. cit.*, 46, in Rouillard, *op. cit.*, 35, and in Roy's *Noms géographiques de la Province de Quebec* (Quebec, 1906), 169. The history of the derived word *Gaspesia* will be found on page 12 of this volume.

[1] Our author's account of Gaspé, and of Isle Percée, is accurate, as is to be expected from the intimacy of his acquaintance with them both. Their geographical relations are shown by the accompanying outline maps. Isle Percée is over a fourth of a mile long, very narrow, 288 feet high, everywhere precipitous, connected with the mainland by a bar, and pierced as our author

while it has a resemblance to an island only at high water. It is separated from the mainland by not more than two or three arpents of land; and it even appears as if it had formerly been joined thereto, and had only been separated by the storms and tempests of the sea.

We have at that place [1] a somewhat important mission, and thence with much grief I learn [6] through one of our missionaries, the Reverend Father Emanuel Jumeau,[2] who

states. Its characteristics are beautifully exhibited in the photographic illustrations of Professor Clarke's works cited below. It is the most notable feature of a strikingly bold and beautiful region, which has attracted the appreciative notice of literary visitors from Champlain to those of our own day. The principal of the resulting descriptions, aside from those of Champlain and Denys, are by Thos. Pye in his *Canadian Scenery, District of Gaspé* (Montreal, 1866); by Faucher de Saint Maurice, in his *Promenades dans le Golfe Saint-Laurent* (Quebec, 1881); by S. G. W. Benjamin, in *The Century Magazine* for March 1884; by J. G. H. Creighton in *Picturesque Canada;* by G. W. Browne in his *Saint Lawrence River* (New York, 1905); and by J. M. Clarke in his *Percé, a brief sketch of its Geology* (in *Report of the New York State Palæontologist*, 1903), in his *Sketches of Gaspé* (Albany, N.Y., 1908), and his *Early Devonic History of New York and Eastern North America* (*Memoir 9 of the New York State Museum*, Albany, N.Y., 1908). The second of these three last-named works is an appreciative, interesting, and beautifully illustrated general account of this region, while the first, and especially the third, although primarily scientific geological treatises, incidentally abound in matter of general interest, and especially in illustrations which give a vivid idea of the appearance and characteristics of the Gaspé country. A nearly contemporary map of Gaspé Bay, of 1693, is mentioned by Harrisse in his *Notes*, 212.

[1] That is to say, at the village of Isle Percée, which is not on the island but on the mainland near by. This use of the name of the island for the neighbouring village long persisted, though in our times the name of the village is shortened to Percé.

[2] A biographical notice of Father Jumeau will be found in connection with our author's further mention of his work in Gaspesia, at page 188 of his book (page 152 of this volume).

has returned from Canada at the very time when this history is being printed, that the hospice and the church which we have had built there, and which even the most barbarous Indians of New France held in remarkable veneration, has not been safe from the fury and rage of the English, the Hollanders, and the renegade Frenchmen, who have reduced everything to ashes under circumstances calculated to make Hell itself shudder with horror. Here follow the contents of the letter which this good religious[1] writes me from Isle-Dieu, under date of the 15th October 1690 :—

[7] "*My Reverend Father,—I pass over in silence the harrowing details of the shipwreck which we experienced last year, in a terrible night on the twenty-third day of November, against the Cap des Rosiers, fifteen leagues from Isle Percée, and of the misfortune which we have suffered this year, in our capture by a privateer of Flessingue*[2] *at fifty leagues from La Rochelle. This I do in order to let you share the sole grief which engrosses me wholly at present, and which, I am sure, will afflict you no less than myself, since I have been a witness of the trouble that you have taken in the establishment of our mission at Isle Percée, and of the zeal with which you have there promoted the glory of God and the salvation of* [8] *souls. It seems as if our Lord had willed to save my life in the shipwreck only in order that I might be the witness of the total ruin and entire desolation of this place so that I could myself give you an account thereof. This narrative will suffice to convince everybody to what an extreme of impiety and rage heresy can attain, when once it finds itself in condition to undertake and to execute all that it desires through the agency of its adherents. To be brief, I need only tell you that at the commencement of the month of August*

[1] I have been no more successful than preceding translators in finding an English equivalent for the French word *Religieux*, and therefore in the following pages I am obliged to use "religious" as a noun.

[2] Now called Flushing, a port of Holland. At the time of which Father Jumeau writes the French and the Hollanders were at war.

*last, two English frigates appeared in the roadstead of the Isle of Bonaventure flying the standard of France, and, through this stratagem, they easily seized five fishing vessels,*[1] *whose captains*

[1] Father Jumeau's account of the capture of the French ships and the destruction of the settlement of Isle Percée is confirmed from other sources. Thus Sylvanus Davis, a New Englander, then a captive at Quebec, wrote in his journal under August 10: "News came to town that our English had taken six French ships at the Isle of Percey," and again on September 3, he wrote: "News that our ships was gone from Isle Percey" (*Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 3rd series, I. 110). Another account, with additional details, was written by De Monseignat in a *Relation* of 1690, which reads: "Isle Percée, consisting of a few houses situate at the entrance of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, has also been plundered this summer by some English pirates. That place is the rendezvous for a few vessels which come there to fish for Cod. It contained only seven or eight settlers with a Franciscan convent and a few friars; six vessels were at anchor there and fishing with their boats, which were all taken without any resistance. The captains and the major part of the crews escaped into the woods along with the settlers, and finally got to Quebec in Biscayan longboats. The houses have been burnt and the Recollect church desecrated. Some of those who escaped returned hence to see if the enemy had left anything, but they have been attacked by the English army which was on its way to besiege us. They abandoned their vessel and escaped" (*Translation in Documents relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, IX. 477). A briefer though otherwise similar account, apparently condensed from the original of this memoir, is given by De la Potherie in his *Histoire de l'Amerique septentrionale*, III. (edition of 1753), 90. A different date for the destruction of the churches is given in a letter from Du Champigny to the Minister, of May 10, 1691, a copy of which is in the Canadian archives. It reads, in translation, "The Recollects of New France entreat his Majesty to grant them some gift in consequence of the loss they suffered on the 18th of September last (1690) by the invasion of the English into Isles Percée and Bonnaventure, when the ornaments of the church and the sacred vessels were carried off, and their church and convent reduced to ashes."

The question now arises as to the identity of these two English *frigates*, and their crews, whose destruction of the settlement and ships is perhaps excusable by the canons of war, but whose execrable treatment of the mission church is pardonable upon no basis whatever. One's natural first thought would be that they formed part of the New England expedition led against Quebec in the autumn of that year by Sir William Phips; and this was the belief of Charlevoix, who states it without qualification (*Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, Shea's translation, edition of 1902, IV., 161). Charlevoix has, of course, been followed by others. His confusion of Phips' two expeditions of 1690, or rather his supposition that they were one and the same, was entirely natural; but we now know that the earlier expedition against Port

*and crews, wholly occupied at the time with the fishery, were all* [9] *obliged to seek safety at Quebec, because they were not in a state to defend themselves, nor to resist so many nations*

Royal and Chedabucto set out from Boston in late April and returned partly in late May and partly in June, while his Quebec expedition did not leave Boston until August 9, and proceeded so slowly that it did not reach the vicinity of Isle Percée until mid-September, whereas the two English ships were at Isle Percée at the beginning of August. The two English ships were not, therefore, a part of Phips' expedition. Nor were they English war ships, for such could not have been present at this time in these waters without mention in the records, and no such mention exists; nor was the conduct of their crews in accord with this character. On the other hand, about this time, there were present in Acadian waters two English vessels of a very different character, for in July of that year, two English "pirate" vessels had pillaged Port Royal, and committed other outrages on the Acadian coast (Charlevoix, *op. cit.*, 162; Murdoch, *History of Nova Scotia*, I. 195). It would seem probable that it was these two pirates which committed the deeds described by Father Jumeau, and this view receives the strongest confirmation from their designation as "pirates" by De Monseignat in the passage cited earlier in this note. But our knowledge of these pirates does not end here, for records exist which prove their identity. In a letter of October 20, of the same year, Lieutenant-Governor Leisler, of New York, wrote to the authorities in England an account of the preparations for the land movement against Quebec, and added mention of "the forces sent by sea at the same time by us viz. Captn. Mason a Ship of 20 Guns Capt. Goderis a Brigandine, and Captn. Bollen a sloop all well appointed, who attacked Port Real, formerly Plundered." Then follows a description of events agreeing closely with the accounts of the doings of the pirate vessels in Acadia, and ending "at the Isle Piercee, that they burnt 80 fishing Chaloupes, despoyling great Quantitys of fish" (*Documents relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, III. 751). The records above cited show that one of the three vessels was captured by a French privateer (Charlevoix, *op. cit.*, 163), and there can remain no doubt, especially in view of the mention of "Isle Piercee" in this connection, that the other two were the English frigates or pirates which plundered Isle Percée as described by Father Jumeau. Obviously they were not genuine pirates, but closely allied privateers (which are a kind of legalised pirates), authorised by the State of New York. Father le Clercq's description of their crews as composed of English, Hollanders, and renegade Frenchmen, is obviously consistent with this origin; for, coming from New York, they would naturally include some Dutch seamen, while the French renegades would be those who joined them during their operations in Acadia, including one at Miramichi, as mentioned in a footnote to page 179 of the present work. It is not quite clear which of the three captains was the commander of whom Father Jumeau later speaks, but the implication of Leisler's letter would seem to ascribe this infamous prominence to Mason.

*banded against them. Then, these sworn enemies of the state and of religion attempted a landing, which succeeded as they hoped, and they remained there for eight entire days, during which they committed a hundred impieties, with all the excesses imaginable. And among other things they robbed, ravaged, and burnt the houses of the residents, who number at least eight to ten families,*[1] *and who, for the most part had already taken refuge hurriedly in the woods, in order to escape an encounter with, and the cruelty of, these pitiless heretics, who committed horrible carnage and laid everything waste with fire and sword. I shudder with horror at the simple* [10] *recollection of the impieties and sacrileges committed by these villains in our church, which they used as a guard-house and as a place of debauchery. Animated by the same spirit as the iconoclasts, they shattered our images, trampled them under foot, and hurled against them a thousand imprecations with curses and insults, as if they had been living beings. The pictures of the Holy Virgin and of Saint Peter were not exempt from their fury, nor from their passions, for both of these were riddled with more than a hundred and fifty gun shots, discharged by these miserable wretches, who pronounced each time in mockery and derision these words of the Litanies:* Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis: Sancte Petre, ora pro nobis. *Not a cross escaped their* [11] *fury, with the exception of the one which I had formerly planted upon*

[1] Curiously enough, the names of these families have been in large part preserved. Among the Clairambault papers mentioned in a later note (page 77 of this volume), is a census of Isle Percée in 1688 made by Richard Denys de Fronsac, the testimony of which is sustained by a petition of these residents, of date 1685, and by the Census of 1686 (the documents are published in annotated translation in the *Collections of the New Brunswick Historical Society*, III., 1907, 19 and 32, and the census in Murdoch's *History of Nova Scotia*, I. 172). The names of the heads of families were Vincent Chateigne dit Lepine, Nouel Boissel, one Richard, Pierre Valleau (perhaps) dit Le Garçon, one Jacque, with probably Pierre Dulion and Pierre Egron dit Lamote, while Pierre Filtoupier and Jacque Boisel were residents in 1676. None of these names now survives at Isle Percée, as I am informed by our best authority upon such subjects, M. Placide Gaudet of Ottawa.

*the Table à Rolland,*[1] *and which, because it was upon a mountain of too difficult access, stands still to this day all alone as the sacred token of our Christianity. The sacrileges of Baltazar who, in olden times in the midst of a festival, profaned the sacred vessels of the Temple of Jerusalem by making his courtesans and his concubines drink therefrom, were the same as those committed by these heretics, who, in the midst of their horrible debaucheries, extending through day and night, drank from our chalices their bumpers to the health of the Prince of Orange, whom they blessed, while launching on the contrary a thousand imprecations against their rightful King. The Commander, in order to distinguish himself as much by his impieties as he was by his position,* [12] *arrayed himself in the most beautiful of our chasubles, and, with an ostentation as frivolous as it was ridiculous, paraded upon the beach with the silver monstrance attached to his hat, whilst he obliged his comrades by a thousand words of wickedness to offer him the same honours and reverences which the Catholics render in their most solemn processions to the very Holy Sacrament of the altar. They brought all these impieties to an end at length by a ceremony as extraordinary in its form as it is extravagant and abominable in all its details. They took the crowns of the Holy Sacrament, and of the Blessed Virgin, and placed them upon the head of a sheep ; they tied the feet of this animal, and, having laid it down upon the consecrated stone of the* [13] *high altar, they slaughtered it, and offered it in sacrifice, in derision of the sacrifice of the Holy Mass. This they did in order to give thanks to God (so they said), for the first advantages they had secured over the papists of New France. They then set fire to the four corners of the church, which was soon reduced to ashes, as was likewise the church of our Mission in the Isle Bonaventure,*

[1] The conspicuous mountain back of Isle Percée, now called Mount Saint-Anne. The name appears first as *Table de Roland* in Sagard's *Histoire du Canada* of 1636, page 144. He says it was so named by the sailors "because of its height, and the various segments which are at its summit" (*à cause de sa hauteur, & les diuerses entre-coupures qui sont au sommet d'icelle*).

*which had also a similar fate after they had shattered the images and slashed all the ornaments with heavy sabre cuts. You can well judge, by the grief that you yourself feel at the simple recital I make to you of these disasters, how keenly I was grieved when I found, still lying in the very place where the high altar of our church had stood, the carcass of the sheep* [14] *which had served as the victim in the abominable sacrifice of these infidels. Outraged, and pierced with grief, to see all the crosses of this Mission thus hacked to pieces or overturned upon the ground, I formed at that very moment the resolution to replace the principal ones. In this I succeeded, with the charitable help of the residents, who set themselves at this sacred task with even more of piety and of devotion than these miserable heretics had exhibited of fury and of rage in overturning them. But alas! my dear Father, I have much reason to believe, and I fear indeed, that they felt once more the dire consequences of a second invasion of these sworn enemies of our holy religion, because, two days after the erection of these crosses, that is to say the tenth of September,* [15] *we were obliged to cut our cables quickly and to make sail, at sight of seven hostile ships,*[1] *which gave us chase in a strange manner, but from which we happily escaped at last by favour of the night, during which we saw with regret all the habitations of Petite Rivière*[2] *on fire. God knows the*

[1] These seven ships were, of course, a part of the New England expedition led by Sir William Phips, against Quebec. It had sailed from Boston, thirty-two vessels strong, on August 9, 1690, but proceeded so slowly that it was mid-September before it reached the mouth of the Saint Lawrence. The expedition seems to have intended Isle Percée as a rendezvous, for Major Walley writes in his journal of the expedition (in Hutchinson's *History of Massachusetts-Bay*, 1795, II. 554): "Having passed the isle of Percey, and being put back by a contrary wind, it was designed there to have landed our souldiers, to have settled our companys, to have called a council of warr, to have made and declared such orders as was necessary for regulating our forces, but by several of our ships and vessels being drove out of the harbour by a storm, they came not in again seasonably, and soe what was intended was prevented."

[2] The settlement at Petite Rivière, now Barachois, at the head of Mal Bay, is described in the note to page 24 of our author's book (page 78 of the present volume).

*embarrassment and uneasiness in which we then found ourselves, since we had not the ballast necessary to enable us to crowd sail in order to escape more speedily from Isle Percée as we wished. And besides we lacked bread, fresh water and, in a word, everything which was needed for a navigation as long and as difficult as that from Canada to France. But in the end our Lord delivered us through His mercy from all these dangers,* [16] *and especially from the privateer of Flessingue, who, having made himself master of our vessel, robbed us completely, and then, having detained us only four to five hours on board his ship, sent us again on our own after many threats and much bad treatment. Two days after, having been in the meantime chased by another vessel, we happily made sight of l'Isle Dieu, where we have come to anchor in the harbour, and whence I write you this letter, looking forward to conversing with you more fully upon the misfortunes of our Mission of Isle Percée. Remember me, meanwhile, when you say your Mass, and believe me, for eternity, wholly yours.*[1]

We have reason to believe that, because, no doubt, of the many horrors [17] and sacrileges they committed, these infidels did not succeed in the vile project which they had formed of desolating completely the colony of New France, and that the Lord, who plays as he pleases with the intentions of the wicked, will protect his faithful subjects against the sworn enemies of his Holy Gospel, and will deliver his people from the oppression and the tyranny of these cruel Pharaohs by giving the victory to the Canadians under the leadership of Monsieur le Comte de Frontenac. This we have reason to hope, according to the latest news we have received from Canada.

The Church of this Mission was dedicated to the Prince of the Apostles, and the ceremony that was performed for that purpose came near costing me my [18]

[1] This important letter is also translated in full, with comments, in Clarke's *Sketches of Gaspé*, 51.

life.[1] For in order to render the ceremony more notable, more formal, and more magnificent, I had embarked in a canoe, with three of our Indians, for the purpose of taking to the church everything which I could find in

[1] The date of the dedication of the Church of Saint Peter is somewhat uncertain, but it must have fallen in a year towards the close of our author's mission. The earliest mention that I find bearing upon the subject is in a document in the *Clairambault Collection* (described in the note on page 77 of this volume), undated but shown by internal evidence to belong probably in 1681, which refers to a chapel and lodging for two Recollects. It is, however, not likely that this *chapelle* was the Church of Saint Peter, but a temporary building. A document given by Réveillaud (in Le Tac, *Histoire chronologique*, 216), states that Brother Didace was at that time at Isle Percée in order to build a church; but this document, though dated in 1682, belongs in or about 1686, for it speaks as if Monseigneur de Saint Valier were then in Canada to which he came only in 1685. Another document in the same work (*op. cit.*, 232) dated 1685, but certainly belonging to 1687 (because written soon after its author's return to France in 1687) also speaks of the presence of Brother Didace at Isle Percée for finishing the church. Hence the church could not have been built before 1685 and it may not have been finished until after 1687, in which latter year Father le Clercq returned to France. It must therefore have been dedicated before it was wholly completed, and we may accept 1686 as the most probable date of the dedication. Father le Tac, in his *Histoire Chronologique* of 1689 (page 38) speaks of it as "une fort belle église."

The site of the church is not known, and the traditions appear to be conflicting. Professor J. M. Clarke, who knows this region so well both historically and scientifically, writes me: "There is a tradition at Percé that the old *St. Pierre de Percé* stood about where the fine new Saint Michael's church now is." But the late Father Lavoie, the parish priest at Percé, informed me that it is supposed to have stood on Mount Joli. This location is confirmed independently by Father Hugolin, who writes me that the traditions at Percé concerning the Saint Michael's Church site refer to modern predecessors of that church, but that he has found traces of a tradition of an older church "of the time of the Bretons," which must have been on Mount Joli. Moreover, he adds, human bones have been found near the supposed Mount Joli site, leading to the belief that there was an ancient cemetery there, quite distinct from the neighbouring modern cemetery; and in accordance with custom that older cemetery would have been in all probability not far from the church. The probable exact site of the church, as Father Hugolin believes, was on the north side of the Mount Joli ridge, somewhat down the slope at a place where the ground is fairly level. All probabilities seem to favour the correctness of Father Hugolin's identification. The site of the Church of Sainte-Claire in Isle Bonaventure, mentioned on page 20 of our author's book, is equally uncertain, though presumably it stood within the present principal settlement.

the way of ornaments, when bad weather surprised us.[1] The sea changed almost in a moment, and there arose finally a storm and tempest so furious, that it shattered and carried away the two ends of our canoe, with the result that we found ourselves in the water up to the belt; and we were in manifest danger of perishing and losing everything, had it not been for the charitable aid of our Indians. For these barbarians, who were then, by good fortune for us, encamped upon the borders of the sea, happily perceived our misfortune. They were thereby so deeply [19] affected that they promptly threw off their clothes, and, with a generosity which we cannot sufficiently acknowledge or admire, some betook themselves all naked to swimming, while others embarked in their canoes, to such good effect that they delivered us finally from the peril into which we had unhappily fallen. Our French captains were pleased to recognise by their feasts, and by the presents which they bestowed generously upon all of these Indians, the good services which the latter had just rendered to their missionaries. Further, in a holy emulation, these gentlemen were pleased also to give all the emphasis, and to exhibit all the fervour which could be hoped for in a barbarous land [20] and under circumstances so disagreeable, in order to honour the ceremony of the dedication of the first Church which had ever been built to the glory of God in this place of the fishery since the establishment of the Faith and the birth of Christianity in New France, as you can see very fully discussed in the book that I have written, *On the First Establishment of the Faith in New France*, which is sold by the same bookseller.[2]

[1] Possibly our author was on his way from Petite Rivière (Barachois), where, no doubt, there was a chapel for the use of the residents of that place, but it is probable that he was coming from Restigouche, which appears to have been the centre of his later missionary work.

[2] Yet there is, unfortunately, no reference to this matter in that book. The reasons therefor are discussed in the Introduction to the present volume (page 21).

This Mission, together with that of Isle de Bonaventure, which has Sainte-Claire for titular saint and patron, and which is distant from Isle Percée only by about the extent of a short league, has been assigned to us with the consent of Monseigneur de Laval, at that time Bishop of Petraea and Vicar [21] Apostolic, but since then the first Bishop of Quebec, by Monsieur le Comte de Frontenac,[1] Lieutenant-General of the armies of the King, Governor of all New France, who did this in order that nothing should be lacking in the unwearied zeal which he has always exhibited for the spiritual and temporal comfort of those subjects of His Majesty who come to trade, to fish, or to dwell in this new colony. The Recollects will always be indebted to him for the honour of having been the first resident missionaries of this fine mission,[2] which has been rendered notable and flourishing through the labours and the apostolic cares which they have taken for the salvation of the French and of the Indians who compose it to-day. It is [22] there that the Reverend Fathers Hilarion Guesnin and Exuper de Thunes[3] have signalised their zeal and their piety, to the singular edification of all these peoples.

[1] This statement, that the Recollects were assigned to this mission by Frontenac, is not only repeated even more strongly in our author's other book (*First Establishment of the Faith*, II. 80), but is fully substantiated by Letters Patent from the King, dated 1678, confirming the Recollects in the rights at Isle Percée granted them by Frontenac. The document is given by Réveillaud (in Le Tac, *Histoire Chronologique*, 192), and is the one mentioned by our author in his *Premier Établissement* (*First Establishment of the Faith*, II. 98).

[2] The Recollects, it is true, were the first resident missionaries at Isle Percée; but the Jesuits, and notably Father Richard, had laboured in other parts of the mission as transient missionaries much earlier. Compare the *Jesuit Relations*, Thwaites' edition, XLV. 73; LII. 217; LX. 117, 263; also our author's own statements on page 277 of his book.

[3] Father Guesnin (or Guenin) was one of the first of the Recollects to come to Canada in 1670 (*First Establishment of the Faith*, II. 71). It is not clear, however, when he was at Isle Percée, for our author speaks in the work just cited (II. 80) as if Dethunes were the first priest there, and he not before 1673, while Father le Clercq himself arrived in 1675. Probably Father Guesnin spent only a summer there with the fishermen. Father de Thunes, or Dethunes, was apparently one of those who came out in the autumn of 1671

The very Reverend Father Potentien Ozon, Provincial of the Recollects of Saint Antoine de Pade in Artois, who went out in the capacity of Commissary and Superior of our missions in 1675, in order to continue there the good work in which these illustrious missionaries had already made a saintly beginning, assigned me to that place in the same year. *Le Lion d'Or*, commanded by Captain Coûturier, was the vessel upon which I embarked[1] in order to reach Isle Percée as soon as possible. We arrived there the 27th of October in the same year, after having [23] experienced a thousand dangers. Amongst others was a tempest, very close to the well-known Isle of Anticostie, so angry and so violent, that our captain, finding it impossible to resist the fury of the gale, decided to go straight to France without anchoring in the roadstead of the Isle of Bonaventure, thereby abandoning the men whom he, in going to Quebec, had left there to prosecute the cod fishery. But at length a calm suddenly succeeded the tempest at about six o'clock in the morning, and caused our captain to change his mind. He continued his route as before, and, after many troubles and hardships, we landed very happily, thanks be to God, [24] at about four o'clock in

(*op. cit.*, II. 74, 76). He went to Isle Percée in May 1673, and served there until 1683, when he was recalled to Quebec to become Superior of the Recollects (*op. cit.*, II. 80). During the years from 1675 to 1683, therefore, he and Father le Clercq were the "two Recollects" mentioned in some of the documents in the Clairambault Collection, described in the note on page 77 of this volume. We have independent evidence of the presence at Isle Percée during the summer of two Recollects, one of whom lived in winter with the Indians while the other remained at Isle Percée with the few French there (Document given by Réveillaud in Le Tac, *Histoire Chronologique*, 216). It seems plain that Father Dethunes was the other Recollect at Isle Percée, and that he remained there while Father le Clercq was with the Indians. Father Dethunes was afterwards Superior of the Recollects in Canada, and died in France in 1692, as Father Hugolin informs me. The successor of Father Dethunes was apparently Father Joseph Denys, concerning whom there is mention in some of the documents given by Réveillaud, and whose biography by Father Hugolin has already been mentioned (page 8, note 5).

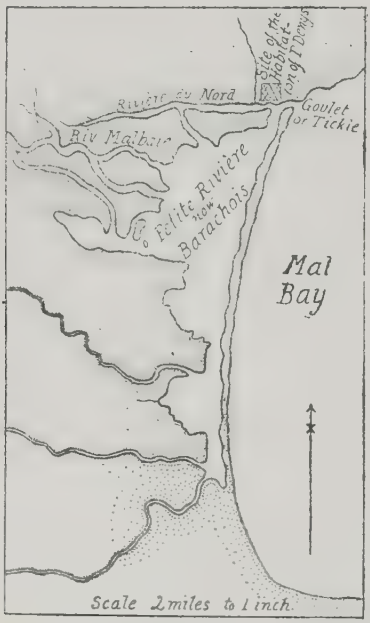
[1] This embarkation was not from France, but from Quebec, as the next page shows.

the afternoon, at the establishment of Monsieur Denys. He was very well established upon the border of a basin commonly called La Petite Rivière, separated from the sea by a beautiful tongue of land, which, by the wonderful charm it gives to this place, renders it a very agreeable abode.[1]

[1] This Monsieur Denys was Pierre Denys, Sieur de la Ronde, son of Simon Denys, who was brother of Nicolas, one-time proprietor and governor of all the coasts from Gaspé to Canso, and author of the well-known book *Description geographique et historique . . . Histoire naturelle . . . de l'Amerique septentrionale.* The biographical details concerning Pierre Denys are given by Tanguay in his *Dictionnaire Généalogique*, and by Forsyth de Fronsac in his *Memorial* of his family, published at Boston in 1903, while Father Hugolin is publishing a full biography of him, in connection with the life of Father Joseph Denys (Denis), his son, in the *Revue du Tiers-Ordre*, (beginning November, 1907). In brief, Pierre Denys was born at Tours in 1631, and came, while yet very young, with his father to Quebec. His connection with Gaspé and Isle Percée, which began in 1671 or 1672 and extended over some eight or ten years, is in some features explained in great detail in a series of papers, still unpublished, in the Clairambault Collection (1016, folios 295-333) in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. These documents, for copies of which I am indebted to the extensive knowledge and friendly co-operation of Mr. H. P. Biggar, are of such interest that I have been greatly tempted to include them in full in this work, and have only refrained because of their very local character. In one of these, a "Contract de la Seigneurie de l'Isle percée," it is shown that Pierre Denys, Escurier, Sieur de la Ronde, Maistre Charles Bazire, receveur general des droits du Roy, and Charles Aubert, Sr. de la Chesnaye, having formed a company to carry on a fishery, obtained from Monsieur Talon, the Intendant, in 1672, July 20, a grant, made out in the name of Pierre Denys, of the coasts a league in depth from a league south of Isle Percée to half a league within the Bay of Gaspé, with the right of trade with the Indians and of admiral over the fishing ships, which, however, were to have the privilege of using the beaches not needed by the company. The company having expended large sums in improvements, and having carried on the fishery as agreed, this grant was confirmed, as that of the Seigneurie of Isle Percée, with an apportionment of the respective shares of the proprietors, by the Intendant du Chesneau on November 2, 1676. The grant fell within the lands formerly ceded to Nicolas Denys, who protested against it (*The Champlain Society's Edition of Denys' Work*, page 222); but the protest was vain, since Denys' own grant was already in fact, even if not in form, forfeit for non-fulfilment of its conditions. From the beginning Pierre Denys was the active manager of the enterprise. In 1672 he went to Isle Percée to live, and in 1673 was joined by his family, who were accompanied by the Recollect Father Exuper Dethunes (*First Establishment of the Faith*, II. 80). No doubt their residence here was, however, only temporary, and for the summer season. Documents of the Clairambault Col-

The solitude in which I then found myself, along with three to four persons who were in the service of Monsieur Denys, although unforeseen, was nothing other than agreeable and pleasing to me. I can even say with truth that it was the chief of all my consolations, because it gave me as much time

lection, of date 1676, state that in September of that year a brother and son of Pierre Denys, with a Recollect father and three other persons, were at Isle Percée or Petite Rivière, and that at Isle Percée was a large storehouse of fifty feet by twenty-five, a lodging for the commandant, and another, not yet finished, for the Recollects, with 100 arpents of cleared land. At Petite Rivière, which other documents locate at the bottom of the Baye des Morues, two leagues from Isle Percée (thereby establishing its identity with the present Barachois), was the winter settlement and general headquarters, that at Isle Percée being only a summer fishing station. Here was a dwelling for fifteen persons, storehouses, stables, cleared lands, gardens, farming utensils, boats, cattle, poultry, swine, and a host of articles and stores of which a full list is given. This was the settlement at which Father le Clercq found Monsieur Denys "very well lodged" in October 1675. His "basin, commonly called la Petite Rivière," was obviously that now called Barachois. This is enclosed by a long beach which is now treeless, though it was perhaps wooded when our author described it as "a beautiful tongue of land." It is not clear why this basin should have been named "Little River," but our author's narrative shows that such was its name. Very probably the name was applied first to the Goulet or Tickle together with Rivière du Nord, and was extended thence to the basin. The exact site of the settlement on the Barachois is not stated, but the full description of the place sent me by Rev. Father Sirois, formerly of the village of Barachois, shows that there is only one suitable site for settlement around the entire basin, and that is in the position of the present village of Barachois, which is admirably situated in all respects. Not only are the situation and the land of great excellence, but the part of the basin in front forms an admirable harbour for fishing boats, the very best place for this purpose anywhere in the basin. Here, accordingly, the establishment of Pierre Denys must have stood, though there is now no trace or tradition



as I could reasonably desire in order to prepare myself sacredly for the arduous and laborious functions of my first [25] mission, which the merit of obedience had confided to my care.

One man, who, though of lowly origin, exhibited an uncommon virtue, rare enough among servants, even those most zealous for the service of God and of their masters, did much to soften the rigours of our winter.[1] It can be said that I was charmed by the pleasure that he took in the conversations which we often had together concerning the important affair of his salvation. He took a particular care to awaken me

thereof in the village. The site of the buildings at Isle Percée is not known, but local tradition places them at North Beach, where now are extensive fishing establishments ; and the probabilities favour this site. The Recollect fathers received grants of land from the company on November 22, 1676, at both Petite Rivière and Isle Percée, a tract four arpents by forty at the former place, and one arpent square, with their house, at the latter (Document, abstract, by Réveillaud in Le Tac, *Histoire Chronologique*, 190). But the enterprise of the company was not a success. Pierre Denys, afflicted with failing sight which later led to complete blindness, retired in favour of one of his brothers and died in 1708. Later the grant appears to have lapsed, for another document of the Clairambault Collection shows that in 1685 the residents of Isle Percée, who had been in the employ of Pierre Denys, petitioned Richard Denys for grants of their lands as if the rights thereto had reverted to their original owner, Nicolas Denys. There is some evidence that in 1687 Denys de Bonnaventure, the son of Pierre Denys, who had aided him at the settlement, received a new grant at Isle Percée; but the particulars are not known to me. In 1690 both settlements were destroyed by the English as Father Jumeau relates, and the history of those places in the period to which this book relates came to an end.

[1] It is possible, I think, to name this person who was thus a comfort to Father le Clercq during his first winter. In a document in the Clairambault Collection at Paris (described in the note to page 77) dated September 15, 1676, Pierre Denys names these persons as then present at Isle Percée and Petite Rivière: his brother Saint Pierre, his son Bonnaventure du Tartre, his "petit cadet" Jacque Boisel, a sailor named Pierre Filtoupier, and one Lespine with his wife. Obviously the first two were not there the preceding winter, or Father le Clercq would have mentioned them, and the next two seem wholly unlikely to fit our author's designation. But Lepine, whose name was Vincent Chateigne, dit Lepine (or Lespine), is shown by other documents in the same collection to have become a permanent, and the most prominent as well as the oldest, resident of Isle Percée. It seems likely, therefore, that this was the person to whom our author refers.

regularly every day at four o'clock, in order that I might prepare to celebrate the Holy Mass, which I said as a rule at daybreak with the morning prayers. [26] And at evening, following the very praiseworthy custom generally observed among all the families of New France, we said our beads together, along with the usual prayers, which were followed by the reading of the most touching reflections upon the last judgment, composed by the Very Reverend Father Hyacinthe le Febvre.[1] Since this is a work replete with learning, and with the most solid truths of Christianity, it has for this reason always been of very great aid to me in all the different places to which obedience has assigned me in the service of our missions. I have been accustomed to call it my missionary excellent above all, since during my absence it has worked fruitfully at the conversion [27] of souls. The explanation thereof is this, that having on one occasion given it to a certain Catholic whose life was not of the best, the reading which he did in it during six weeks inspired him with sentiments of contrition so sincere and so genuine, that in returning this book into my hands he made me a general confession of all his past life, after having been more than eighteen years without going to confession.

I devoted myself assiduously throughout this winter to the study of certain writings in the Algomquinne tongue; these had been given me in the belief that they would be necessary to me for the instruction of the Indians on their return from their hunting, which they pursued at fifteen or twenty [28] leagues from our establishment.[2] All my labour, nevertheless,

[1] Our author, in his *Premier Etablissement*, speaks again of Father le Febvre as "twice provincial of our province of St. Anthony in Artois," and "for the second time provincial of that of St. Denis in France" (Shea's *First Establishment of the Faith*, II. 204). He was the author of a book mentioned in an earlier note in this volume (page 3).

[2] The Indians always hunted in winter, and principally for moose, in the depths of the woods, while they spent the summers mostly along the sea coast.

was useless, for our Gaspesians understood Algomquin only very imperfectly ; and it was necessary for me to begin all over again the study of the Gaspesian prayers which were sent me from Quebec by the first boat which set out for Isle Percée at the beginning of spring. I learned them in a very short time, with much greater ease than I had anticipated. I taught them also for the first time to our Indians, and with much success, by means of some instructive characters of which I shall speak in the continuation of this history.[1] But at length, since all the application that I could concentrate upon making myself learned in Gaspesian, [29] a knowledge of which, however difficult it may be, is absolutely necessary to the missionaries who wish to work effectively for the salvation of these peoples, was broken during the summer by the services I was obliged to render to the French, who came, sometimes even to the number of four or five hundred, to make the fishery for cod at Isle Percée, I made up my mind that after the departure of the ships I would follow the Indians into the woods during the winter, and live with them in their wigwams, in order to instruct myself completely in the Gaspesian tongue. With this language, after much trouble and labour, I have at length made myself pretty familiar. I have even made a dictionary thereof, [30] which I have left at Quebec in our Monastery of Notre Dame des Anges,[2] in order to render easier to our missionaries, as it did to myself, all the good that it has pleased our Lord to effect through my feeble ministry, and which he would wish to accomplish through their zeal, in the conversion of these pagans who inhabit more than two hundred leagues of this new world, and who bear several different names according to those of the rivers and of the most important places wherein they dwell.

[1] They are described in Chapter VII.

[2] The books of this *Convent de Nôtre-Dame des Anges* are not known in Quebec, as I am told by M. Gagnon, and our author's Dictionary of the Gaspesian tongue, which would indeed constitute a precious philological document, is probably no longer in existence.

As I have especially applied myself, in accord with the advice of my friends, to understanding exactly their maxims, their customs, and their religion, I have thought that I ought to give the public a picture [31] and a faithful and perfect idea of these through this new relation.[1] I shall be only too happy, and too well satisfied for my trouble, if the book is read with the same pleasure with which I write the particulars of all the most curious and most interesting things I have noticed in the missions where I have had the honour to labour during the dozen years that I have lived in New France.

There is one error which is only too common, and of which it is desirable to disabuse the public. It is necessary to admit that some persons in our Europe are persuaded too easily that the peoples of North America, because they have not been bred in the maxims of civil polity, preserve of the nature of man nothing but the [32] name of wild men, and that they have none of those finer qualities of body and of spirit which distinguish the human species from the beasts of the field. And they even believe these people to be all hairy, like the bears, and more inhuman than the tigers and the leopards. It is well, however, to correct an idea so stupid, so unjust, and so unreasonable, and one should know the difference which exists between our Indians and any number of other ferocious and cruel peoples, especially the inhabitants of the Isles of the Gorgades, from which, as history makes mention, a certain Hano, a Carthaginian captain, brought back two wholly hairy skins of women, which he caused to be placed in the temple of Juno as a prodigy and [33] a singular curiosity. For as a matter of fact our Gaspesians have less hair than the French. I have myself seen them pull out the hair of the beard clear to the roots, in order that they may have no more than the women. And, finally, nature inspires

[1] The significance of this phrase new relation (*nouvelle Relation*), which occurs also in the title of our author's book, has been discussed on an earlier page (12) of this volume.

them with sufficient tenderness and charity towards their children, their fellow-countrymen, and even strangers, to prevent the belief that they are like the most ferocious and most violent animals. This will be easily understood from the continuation of this history, where I shall, by the sincerity of my diction, exhibit the Gaspesian Indian in whatever light one can view him.

[34] CHAPTER II

*On the Origin of the Gaspesians*

THE origin of these peoples, and the manner in which this new world has become inhabited by an almost infinite multitude of peoples of many different nations, seems to us so obscure that, even after the most careful and most exact researches which have been made into the subject up to the present time, every one must admit and frankly confess it to be impossible to have any exact and trustworthy knowledge about it.

It seems as if this secret must be reserved solely to the Indians, and that from them [35] alone one ought to learn all the truth about it, seeing that, indeed, there has been a time among ourselves when it was unknown that there was a North America, which even the most learned made no difficulty in assigning to the extramundane regions, since they were unable to locate it within the compass of their minds ; and it is not yet two hundred years since the first discovery of it was made. Our Gaspesians, however, can teach us nothing certain upon this subject, perhaps because they have no knowledge of letters, which could give them information as to their ancestors and their origin. They have, indeed, if you will, some dim and fabulous notion of the creation of the world, and of the deluge. They say that when [36] the sun, which they have always recognised and worshipped as their God, created all this great universe, he divided the earth immediately into several parts, wholly separated one from the other by great lakes : that in each part he caused to be born one man and one woman, and

they multiplied and lived a very long time : but that having become wicked along with their children, who killed one another, the sun wept with grief thereat, and the rain fell from the heaven in such great abundance that the waters mounted even to the summit of the rocks, and of the highest and most lofty mountains. This flood, which, say they, was general over all the earth, compelled them to set sail in their bark canoes, [37] in order to save themselves from the raging depths of this general deluge. But it was in vain, for they all perished miserably through a violent wind which overturned them, and overwhelmed them in this horrible abyss, with the exception, however, of certain old men and of certain women, who had been the most virtuous and the best of all the Indians. God came then to console them for the death of their relatives and their friends, after which he let them live upon the earth in a great and happy tranquillity, granting them therewith all the skill and ingenuity necessary for capturing beavers and moose in as great number as were needed for their subsistence. They add also [38] certain other wholly ridiculous circumstances, which I purposely omit, because they do not bear at all upon a secret which is unknown to men, and reserved to God alone.

Others hold that this new world has been peopled by certain individuals who, having embarked upon the sea for the purpose of establishing a colony in foreign parts, were surprised by storm and tempest, which threw them upon the coasts of North America. Here they were unfortunately shipwrecked, and, with their ships, they lost everything which they must have had with them of property, and of the things which they valued most in the world. Affairs were such that this shipwreck having left them wholly without hope of ever returning [39] into their own country, they resolved to set to work in earnest at the preservation of their lives by applying themselves to fishing and hunting, which have always been very good in those parts, while, in default of their clothes,

necessity, which is the mother of inventions, gave them the ingenuity to clothe themselves with skins of beaver, of moose, and of other animals which they killed in hunting. They hold, further, that it could well have been a fact that these individuals were instructed in the sacred mysteries of our holy Religion, and that they had even a knowledge and the use of letters, since, in the establishment of colonies, it is customary to send there men who are alike learned and pious, in order that they may teach [40] to the peoples, along with purely human knowledge, the most solid maxims of Christian wisdom and piety. Nobody, however, having followed them in these glorious employments, the knowledge which they had of the true God, of letters, and of their origin, was thus gradually lost and effaced from the minds of their unfortunate posterity by the lapse of time.

However this may be, the ancient worship and religious use of the Cross, which still in our own day is held in admiration among the Indians of the River of Mizamichis—a place we have honoured with the august title of the river of Sainte-Croix[1]—might well persuade us that, in some manner or other [41] these people had received in times past a knowledge of the Gospel and of Christianity, which they have finally lost through the negligence and the licentiousness of their ancestors. It is very like something we read in the life of Saint François Xavier, who found in one of his missions a fine Cross, which the Apostle Saint Thomas had planted there, among a people who no longer had anything more than a faint idea, or almost none, of the true religion which this illustrious disciple of JESUS had preached to them with so much of zeal at the expense of his life and his blood. I will give a particular discussion of this matter when I come to speak of the religion of the Gaspesians, of which the origin is altogether unknown to us. They observe, however, and

[1] This matter is mentioned at greater length by our author later in his book (at page 170).

embody in [42] their conduct, a number of maxims of our first fathers, like whom they are clothed, lodged and fed. Nor have they even any other arms, whether for war or for hunting, than those which were first in use among our ancestors after the creation of the world.

## CHAPTER III

### *On the Birth of the Gaspesians*

IT has been doubted, and with justice, whether men receive more benefit in being born than in dying. It is for this reason that this question was formerly considered as a problem among certain peoples, who divided equally [43] their tears and their rejoicings at the birth and at the death of their children, in proportion to the good or the ill which they would receive in these two states, so contrary and wholly opposed. Such were the disputable and problematical opinions of those ancient philosophers in the shades of paganism, where they lacked the light to know that it is only virtue and sin which make life or death happy or miserable. Since our Indians have been deprived of those good instructions which Christianity inspires in those who are born again in the Holy Spirit through baptism, and since they consider themselves all equal in life as in death, without distinction of the heads of the commonalty [44] of the nation, they rejoice all in common on the birth of their children, even to making feasts, public speeches, and all kinds of rejoicings.

It is not with our Gaspesians as with the Cimbrians, who plunged their children into the snow in order to harden them to the cold and to accustom them to fatigue, nor as with some of our ancient Gauls, who threw them into the water as soon as they were born, in the belief that those which floated and came to the surface in their struggles were truly legitimate, while those which sank to the bottom were to be considered as bastards and illegitimate. The Indians wash their children in the river as soon [45] as they are born, and then they make

them swallow some bear's, or seal, oil. In place of a cradle, they make the children rest upon a little board, which they cover with skins of beaver, or with some other furs. The women adorn this little cradle carefully with certain bits of bead-work, with wampum, porcupine quills, and certain figures which they form with their paints.[1] This is in order to beautify it, and to render it just so much the finer in proportion as they love their children. For these they make little garments of skins, which are all painted and adorned with the prettiest and most curious things they possess. They are accouched with very great ease, and carry very heavy burdens [46] during their pregnancy. Some indeed, finding themselves overtaken by this illness in going to fetch wood, retire a little apart in order to bring the child into the world ; and they carry the wood to the wigwam upon their backs, with the new born babe in their arms, as if nothing at all had happened. An Indian woman, when in a canoe one day, feeling herself pressed by the pains of childbirth, asked those of her company to put her on shore, and to wait for her a moment. She entered alone into the woods, where she was delivered of a boy ; she brought him to the canoe, which she helped to paddle all the rest of the journey. They never give birth to a child in the wigwam, for the men never give it up

[1] This word in the original is *matachias*, and our author uses it again, with variations, at pages 58, 60, 61, 63, and 68. Lescarbot applies it, telling us that it is a Micmac word, to earrings and the like worn by the Indians (*Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, edition of 1612, 732), and Champlain uses it in the same sense (*Voyages*, Laverdière's edition, 40). Denys, however, like our author, applies it to paintings. The word does not appear, as far as I can find, in any of the three prominent works of the great scholar in Micmac, Dr. Silas Rand, viz., his *Dictionary of the Language of the Micmac Indians*, Halifax, 1888 ; his *Micmac Dictionary*, edited by J. S. Clark, Charlottetown, 1902 ; or his *First Reading Book in the Micmac Language*, Halifax, 1875. I am told, however, by Father Pacifique, now the missionary of the Micmacs of Restigouche, to whom I am indebted for much valued information concerning them, that the word is not now in use among them, although it appears, in part at least, in a certain compound, *metasiamogol*, which means "brightly or vari-coloured clothes." The word, curiously enough, is said to persist among the Canadian French (Clapin, *Dictionnaire Canadien-Français*, 360).

to them. The men remain therein [47] whilst the wife is delivered in the woods at the foot of a tree. If she suffers pains, her arms are attached above to some pole, her nose, ears, and mouth being stopped up. After this she is pressed strongly on the sides, in order to force the child to issue from the belly of its mother. If she feels it a little too severely, she calls on the jugglers, who come with joy, in order to extort some smoking tobacco, or other things of which they have need. They say that this is a present which they ask for their Ouahiche,[1] that is to say, their demon, in order that he may chase and remove the germ[2] which hinders the accouchement. It is thus that these master frauds intermeddle everywhere [48] as you will see at length in Chapter XIV.,[3] where I treat of the superstitions of the Gaspesians.

Our Gaspesians are not so ridiculous as the Indians of South America, who at the same moment that their wives are accouched, betake themselves to bed, as if they had themselves suffered the pains and the cramps of childbirth,[4] whilst their

[1] This word appears several times, and with variations of spelling, in our author's pages, viz., 331, 332, 336, 343–347. Although it has every appearance of a Micmac word I have not been able to find it in Rand's Dictionaries. In his other book Father le Clercq speaks of the *Ohi*, or Jugglers, of a western tribe, which is enough like *Ouahiche* to suggest that he took the word from a source other than Micmac (*First Establishment of the Faith*, I. 106). Father Pacifique, however, tells me the Micmacs have a word *Oaitj* (or *Oaitch*) meaning "smart fellow," and this is very probably the same word.

[2] This word in the original is *ver*, which means literally "worm," and on a later page (338) our author gives the Micmac name confirmatory of this signification. But it seems to me very evident from the way in which the word is used that it does not mean a worm in any literal sense, but rather that kind of indefinite cause of a disease which we often designate to-day by the word "germ," using it not, of course, in its narrower technical, but in its broader popular, sense. Accordingly I have so translated it throughout this book.

[3] In reality Chapter XIII., beginning at page 329, is the one in which he gives a full account of the jugglers or medicine-men.

[4] Our author correctly reports this custom which was prevalent among a number of Indian tribes, and is supposed to have originated as an acknowledgment of paternity. There is some evidence that it existed also among the Basques in Europe, as discussed by J. Reade in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, VI., 1888, ii. 27.

wives, with all their relatives and their friends, endeavour to console this imaginary invalid, to whom they give a thousand kindnesses and the best of everything that they have. The Indians have too much spirit to be willing to pass for women newly accouched, [49] although they comfort their consorts with much charity. They go hunting for the purpose of providing the wherewithal for supporting their wives, in order that these may suckle their babes. For it is a thing unheard of, that they should give them out to be nursed, since they cannot persuade themselves to yield to others the fruits of their own bowels. By this conduct they reproach the lack of feeling of those mothers who abandon these little innocents to the care of nurses, from whom very often they suck corruption with the milk. That this is true has been illustrated by unhappy experience in the conduct of Alexander the Great, and of the Emperor Caligula. The first of these, according to Saint Clement of Alexandria, used to get drunk as a beast, because his mother was [50] subject to wine. The second, according to the testimony of history, breathed only blood and carnage, even to a point where he passionately wished that the Roman people had but a single head, in order that he might be able by a single blow to decapitate all the citizens of that powerful Republic ; and this was because his nurse, in order to accustom him to cruelty, and to inspire in him a savage disposition, reddened with her blood the ends of her nipples. Our poor Indian women have so much affection for their children that they do not rate the quality of nurse any lower than that of mother. They even suckle the children up to the age of four or five years, and, when these begin to eat, the mothers chew the meat in order [51] to induce the children to swallow it. One cannot express the tenderness and affection which the fathers and mothers have for their children. I have seen considerable presents offered to the parents in order that these might give the children to certain Frenchmen who would have taken them to France. But this

would have torn their hearts, and millions would not induce them to abandon their children for a moment. These wretched children often repay their poor parents with ingratitude, for some have been seen who have killed and assassinated their fathers when these have reached a decrepit old age. There have been found, I affirm, monsters of nature, who have abandoned them in the midst of the woods and the snows, and who, as a climax to their cruelty, have broken their heads.

[52] Their usual occupation consists in making bows and arrows for killing birds, and lines and hooks for the fishery. They are so expert at these exercises that they kill all kinds of birds on the wing.[1]

[1] This paragraph is curiously isolated from its predecessors, and something which originally introduced it was evidently suppressed—probably in the interest of condensation. The paragraph probably refers to occupations of the children.

## CHAPTER IV

### *On the Clothes and Finery of the Gaspesians*

ALTHOUGH some of our Indians now make their garments from blankets, cloaks, coats, and from cloths that are brought from France, it is nevertheless certain that before the settlement of the French in this new world [53] the Indians clothed themselves only in skins of moose, beaver, marten, and seal, in which indeed, many of these people are clothed even to the present day. The appearance and representation of Hercules, who wears upon his shoulders in the form of a mantle the skin of the lion which he had bravely overcome and slain, as history records, is somewhat like that of an Indian in his wigwam, clothed in the manner of his ancestors. These people, nevertheless, have always exhibited, as do the Gaspesians of to-day, much more modesty than does this false deity, as shown in the particular care which they take to cover and conceal that which nature and decency do not permit to be shown. The severe cold, further, which [54] prevails during the winter in Canada, obliges them to cover themselves much more modestly. But aside from this, however rigorous the winter in their country may be, and however excessive the heat in summer, they always make use of stirrup-like stockings without feet, while their moccasins, which are quite flat and without heels, really resemble leather socks. They line these with moose skins in order always to preserve some warmth for the feet. As to their coats, these are large and broad. The sleeves are not attached to the body, but are separate therefrom, and tied together by two thongs, separated into equal parts by an

opening which serves for the passing of the head. One of these sleeves [55] falls in front, and covers only half of the arm ; the other falls behind, and clothes the entire shoulders. The women's coats are not different in any particular from those of the men. I will tell you only this, that the women dress and clothe themselves with so much reserve and modesty that they do not permit any nakedness to appear which could offend modesty and decency. For their clothes, they make use of a white or red blanket, which falls from the shoulders to the mid-leg in the form of a tunic ; with this they enwrap all the body, and they belt it in by a girdle ornamented with beadwork and wampum.[1]

It is to be noted that it is not possible to persuade them [56] to dress in the French fashion, and there is nothing so grotesque as to see one of our Indian women dressed either in the common fashion or as a lady.[2] They seem to have, with respect to this dress, the feeling and humour of David towards the arms which Saul wished to give him for the fight against Goliath. They say they cannot make themselves like this dress, and that it would be impossible for them to walk or to work freely with the clothes of our Frenchwomen. In a word, they are so enamoured with their own, that they are not willing even to hear ours mentioned. But, nevertheless, there is one thing which seems to me rather ridiculous, both for the men and for the women, which is, that both of them as a rule wear [57] their shirts over their coats.

[1] A somewhat, though not exactly, similar account of their dress is given by Denys, Vol. II. (384) of his well-known work, *Description geographique et historique*, Paris, 1672 (republished and translated by the Champlain Society, 1908), while Lescarbot gives a fuller account of their winter dress in particular (*Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, edition of 1612, 702), Of course the other works upon our Indians, including the *Jesuit Relations*, contain many references to their dress.

[2] The phrase in the original is *en Bourgeoise, ou en Damoiselle.* At the time our author wrote, the word *demoiselle* was applied to married ladies not of the noblesse (according to a note by Shea, in *First Establishment of the Faith*, II. 327).

The ornaments and jewels which are to them the most superb, the most magnificent, and at the same time the most usual, and with which they are adorned in the assemblies and the public feasts, consist in certain collars, belts and bracelets. These they make themselves, and they decorate them in a very simple manner with bead-work [1] and with quills of porcupine, which they colour in red or in yellow, according to their taste and fancy. But aside from this, they are foes of luxury and of vanity ; and by their very modesty they condemn the ambition and the superfluous and quite criminal extravagance of those women who wear on their persons such quantities of riches and jewels, that Saint [58] Clement of Alexandria is astonished that they did not succumb under so heavy and burdensome a load.

Quite unheard of among them are those criminal and voluntary exposures of the person, which are unworthy of those women who are really Christians, and who have so little of love for purity and of zeal for the honour and glory of their sex. The Indian women are content with what nature has given them of grace or beauty, which they even lessen frequently in their wish to conserve it by art through the aid of their painting, with a result which is wholly ridiculous. It is necessary to know that by the painting of the Indians, of which we speak often, there is understood as a rule a [59] mixture of different colours which they use in daubing the face, or for representing upon their garments certain figures of wild beasts, birds, or other animals such as are supplied by their imaginations. They know only four kinds of colours, that is to say, red, white, black and yellow. They have not in their language even a proper and particular name to express

[1] This bead-work (*rassade*) includes, of course, wampum, which several times in his book our author calls *pourcelaine*. Wampum was made from parts of certain sea shells, and a full account of its origin is given in the *Bulletin of the Natural History Society of New Brunswick*, No. VIII., 1889, 12, 91; compare also the references in Thwaites' *Jesuit Relations*, VIII. 312.

the others of which we make use in Europe.[1] The red which they employ is not vivid like our vermilion; it is only a sombre red, much like that of dragon's blood. But as to the Tissaouhianne,[2] which is a little red and slender root like the fruit of parsley [60], it is valued, say they, and much esteemed among them. In fact our Gaspesians, who preserve it with much care, make remarkably good use of it in staining their quills of porcupine a beautiful brilliant red; and with these they ornament their canoes, their snowshoes, and their other works which are sent into France as curiosities.

When, now, we say that the Indians paint themselves,[3]

[1] By his word *couleurs* our author here refers, of course, to pigments, and not to colours in general. Their red and yellow were derived, no doubt, from red and yellow ochre, and the former was the "sombre red" mentioned in the next sentence of his text. The white was probably powdered (and perhaps burnt) shells, while the black was probably bog manganese, or possibly only charcoal, or the black from their pots, suitably admixed with grease.

[2] The identity of this plant is made certain, partly by the description, and partly by the survival of the name among the Canadian French. M. Gagnon tells me that a hair-like red root, of which he sends me samples, is sold in the markets of Quebec, for medicinal purposes, under the name of *Saouyanne*, which is obviously our author's word with the omission of the first syllable. But even more conclusive evidence is given by W. R. Gerard in the *Bulletin of the Torrey Botanical Club*, XII., 1885, 72. After pointing out an erroneous etymology of the word *savoyanne*, he states that in reality the word is from the Canadian-French *tisavoyanne* (abbreviated to *savoyanne*), and that this "is of Indian origin and corresponds to Micmac (Algonkin) *tissawhianne*, 'skin-dye,'" and adds that the word is a general Indian name for plants which yield a dye colour. He cites Kalm (the Swedish botanist who travelled in Canada), as saying that the leaves and stalks of *Coptis* (Gold-thread) were used by the Indians to dye yellow, and that this is called *tissavoyanne jaune* by the Canadian French who apply *tissavoyanne rouge* to the roots of *Galium* (bedstraw or cleavers), especially *G. tinctorium*, used for dyeing red. It is well known that the red dye used by the Indians was obtained from the roots of *Galium tinctorium*. It is mentioned in the *Jesuit Relations* (Thwaites' edition, VII. 81, and XXXVIII. 251), and also by Denys (Champlain Society's edition, 413; compare also the Otis-Slafter *Champlain*, III. 14, 15). Our author's mention of "a fruit like the parsley" is apparently a loose way of saying the plant has a fruit resembling that of the parsley, which is certainly not a happy comparison, but will pass. Returning to the Micmac name, I do not find it in Rand's Dictionaries, but he gives the word *esoweā* as meaning "I dye," and this evidently involves the same root.

[3] In the original the words are *se matachient* (compare the note on page 89 of this volume).

that is equivalent to saying that they daub their faces, which is done sometimes with black and sometimes with red, just as it pleases them. The most capricious make a mixture of these two colours. Some paint themselves with a single colour, or with several ; others daub all the forehead with red, and the remainder of the face [61] with black. Others again, still more fanciful than the first, draw a line wholly of black from the middle of the forehead clear to the end of the nose, while the two cheeks will be all mottled and streaked with white, yellow, black and red. This painting is precisely that of which they make use on the days of their feasts, and of their leading diversions. They use it also even in mourning, for, in order to mark their sorrow and affliction when they hear of the death of some one of their kinsmen, they paint the whole face in black. But when they go to war, then they make use of red, in order, say they, that neither their enemies nor yet their own companions may be able [62] to detect the different expressions of countenance which fear very often causes to appear in even the most intrepid and the bravest persons.[1]

Moreover, it seems to me that one ought not to be so much astonished that our Indians paint themselves in a manner seemingly so ridiculous, since it is certain, according to the report of Pliny, that the Romans formerly painted their bodies vermilion when they entered in triumph into the City of Rome, and that they even coloured their Jupiter therewith. Further, we see only too often in the present, without going to search antiquity, that the women, by their beauty-spots and their paints, borrow a charm which nature has [63] denied them. Consequently our Indians, who sometime ago came to France, have not been able to hear without breaking into laughter, the raillery of certain ladies who took them for masqueraders, because they made appearance at

[1] Our author speaks of this matter again, and to the same effect, at page 460 of his book.

Court painted in the Indian fashion. "They have no sense," said these Indians to their interpreter, "and their reproach is unjust, because they themselves have their own faces all mottled with black, like our Indians, from which it appears that they are always in mourning, judging by their manner of painting themselves."

The Gaspesians, as a rule, all go bare-headed, a custom which is certainly very ancient. For we learn from Roman history that Julius Cæsar marched always [64] in this way at the head of his troops, as well in the sun as in the rain, and that he wore a laurel in form of a crown only after he had asked and obtained the permission of the Senate to do so. Our Indians also, very often, make for themselves a kind of crown from the two wings of the birds which they have killed in their hunting; but they never made use of hats or caps until the French had given them the use thereof. They allow their hair to hang down. Sometimes they tie it up behind; or else they make tresses of it, which they tie suitably, and which they ornament with little strings of beadwork or of wampum. Although children are born among them with hair of different colours, [65] as in Europe, nevertheless these barbarians are never light-haired when they are advanced in age, no matter what care they give their hair. For you will take note, that they think very much of it, and that they darken it by means only of oiling it, and by rubbing it constantly with a kind of grease which they keep especially for this use.[1] The girls also, and the women, rub this grease on their faces as well as upon their hair, especially when it is a matter of appearing in public, persuading themselves that they are never more beautiful or more pleasing than when they have a face all shining with grease. They also pierce their ears, to which they attach certain [66] pieces of beadwork, with little bells, sols-marquez, deniers and other trifles of that sort,

[1] The treatment of the hair is also described, in a manner very similar, by Diéreville in his *Voyage* (173).

which serve them as earrings. I have even seen, and with much surprise, other Indians, commonly called the Nez-percez, because in fact they pierce the cartilage of the nose; to this they attach some bits of beads or of wampum, which fall upon the ends of the lips.

Such are the garments and the finery of our Gaspesians, who esteem them beyond everything that could be imagined. They are so infatuated with their manner of dressing, and with their own way of living, that they disdain ours, and cannot at all accustom themselves thereto. [67] They have also no less repugnance to building houses and palaces like ours. They ridicule and laugh at the most sumptuous and magnificent of our buildings. Nevertheless, they admire the beauty of them, so far as they are capable, without, however, wishing to make use of them.

## CHAPTER V

### *On the Wigwams and Dwellings of the Gaspesians*

SINCE these people live without society and without commerce, they have neither cities, towns nor villages, unless, indeed, one is willing to call by these names certain [68] collections of wigwams having the form of tents, very badly kept, and just as badly arranged.

Their wigwams are built of nothing but poles, which are covered with some pieces of bark of the birch, sewed one to another ; and they are ornamented, as a rule, with a thousand different pictures of birds, moose, otters and beavers, which the women sketch there themselves with their paints. These wigwams are of a circular form, and capable of lodging fifteen to twenty persons ; but they are, however, so made that with seven or eight barks a single one is constructed, in which from three to four fires are built. They are so light and portable, that our Indians roll them up [69] like a piece of paper, and carry them thus upon their backs wheresoever it pleases them, very much like the tortoises which carry their own houses. They follow the ancient custom of our first fathers, who remained encamped in a place only so long as they found there the means of subsistence for their families and their herds. In the same manner, also, our Gaspesians decamp when they no longer find the means to subsist in the places where they are living ; for, having neither animals to feed, nor lands or fields to cultivate, they are obliged to be almost always wanderers and vagabonds, in order to seek food and the other commodities necessary to life. [70] It is the business of the head of the family, exclusively over all others,

to give orders that camp be made where he pleases, and that it be broken when he wishes. This is why, on the eve of departure, he goes in person to trace the road which is to be taken, and to choose a place suitable and ample for the encampment. From this place he removes all the useless wood, and cuts off the branches which could be in the way. He smooths and opens out a road to make it easy for the women to drag over the snow on their toboggans,[1] the trifle of furniture and of luggage which comprises their housekeeping outfit. He marks out, also all by himself, the plan of the wigwam, and throws out the snow with his snowshoes until he has reached the ground, which he flattens and chops out in pieces [71] until he has removed all the frozen part, so that all of the people who compose his family may lodge in the greatest possible comfort. This done, he then cuts as many poles as he considers suitable, and plants them in a circle around the border of the hollow which he has made in the earth and the snow—always in such a manner, however, that the upper ends come together in a point, as with tents or belfrys. When this is finished, he makes preparations for hunting, from which he does not return until the wigwam has been completely put in order by the women, to whom he commits the care thereof during his absence, after assigning to each one her particular duty. Thus some of the women go to collect branches of fir, [72] and then they place the barks upon the poles[2]: others fetch dry wood to make the fire: others carry water for

[1] The word is *tabagannes* in the original, and is used by our author as if a Micmac word. Rand gives, for sled, *Tŏbâkŭn* (*English-Micmac Dictionary*, 239). Although similar forms occur in other Algonkian dialects, it is very likely that it was from the Micmac that the word was adopted *viâ* French into English. Such is the opinion of A. F. Chamberlain, a leading authority upon such questions (*Journal of American Folk-Lore*, XV., 1902, 262).

[2] There seems to be some confusion of wording here, as this clause by itself (*les unes vont cüeillir des branches de sapin, dont elles mettent les écorces sur des perches*) hardly agrees with known facts. But if *dont* is a misprint for *donc*, then the meaning would be such as I give it, and in agreement with actual Indian usage.

boiling in the kettle, in order to have the supper ready when the men return from the hunt. The wife of the head of the family, in the capacity of mistress, selects the most tender and most slender of the branches of fir for the purpose of covering all the margin inside the wigwam, leaving the middle free to serve as a common meeting-place. She then fits and adjusts the larger and rougher of the branches to the height of the snow, and these form a kind of little wall. The effect is such that this little building seems much more like a camp made in the spring than one made in winter, because [73] of the pleasing greenness which the fir keeps for a long time without withering.[1] It is also her duty to assign his place to each one, according to the age and quality of the respective persons and the custom of the nation. The place of the head of the family is on the right. He yields it sometimes, as an honour and courtesy to strangers, whom he even invites to stop with him, and to repose upon certain skins of bears, of moose, of seal, or upon some fine robes of beaver, which these Indians use as if they were Turkey carpets. The women occupy always the first places near the door, in order to be all ready to obey, and to serve promptly when they are ordered. [74] There are very great inconveniences in these kinds of wigwams ; for, aside from the fact that they are so low that one cannot readily stand upright in them, and must of necessity remain always seated or lying down, they are moreover, of a coldness which cannot be described,[2] whilst the smoke which one is necessarily obliged to endure in the company of these barbarians is something insufferable.

All these hardships, without doubt, are not the least of the mortifications which are endured by the missionaries, who,

[1] The high estimation in which the Indians held this greenness is well illustrated by a feature of one of their legends, as narrated by our author on page 322 of his book (page 212 of this volume).

[2] Yet Father Biard, on the contrary, describes them thus : "They are very warm in there around that little fire, even in the greatest rigours of the winter" (*Jesuit Relations*, Thwaites' edition, III. 77).

after the example of Saint Paul, in order to be all things to all men so that they may gain these people to JESUS-CHRIST, do not fail, despite so many discomforts, to work without ceasing at the [75] conversion of these poor pagans.

I pass without mention several other methods of camping which are in use among our Gaspesians,[1] because there is nothing about them more important than that they cause extreme suffering in those who follow the Indians in the woods, and that they are all equally mean and miserable. But however that may be, the Indians esteem their camps as much as, and even more than, they do the most superb and commodious of our houses. To this they testified one day to some of our gentlemen of Isle Percée, who, having asked me to serve them as interpreter in a visit which they wished to make to these Indians in order to make the latter understand that it would be [76] very much more advantageous for them to live and to build in our fashion, were extremely surprised when the leading Indian, who had listened with great patience to everything I had said to him on behalf of these gentlemen, answered me in these words : " I am greatly astonished that the French have so little cleverness, as they seem to exhibit in the matter of which thou hast just told me on their behalf, in the effort to persuade us to convert our poles, our barks, and our wigwams into those houses of stone and of wood which are tall and lofty, according to their account, as these trees. Very well ! But why now," continued he, " do men of five to six feet in height need houses which are sixty to eighty ? [77] For, in fact, as thou knowest very well thyself, Patriarch—do we not find in our own all the conveniences and the advantages that you have with yours, such as reposing, drinking, sleeping, eating, and amusing ourselves with our friends when we wish ? This is not all," said he, addressing himself to one of our captains, " my brother, hast

[1] One of these camping methods, that for a single night in the winter, our author describes on pages 208, 209 of his book.

thou as much ingenuity and cleverness as the Indians, who carry their houses and their wigwams with them so that they may lodge wheresoever they please, independently of any seignior whatsoever? Thou art not as bold nor as stout as we, because when thou goest on a voyage thou canst not carry upon thy shoulders thy buildings and thy edifices. Therefore it is necessary [78] that thou preparest as many lodgings as thou makest changes of residence, or else thou lodgest in a hired house which does not belong to thee. As for us, we find ourselves secure from all these inconveniences, and we can always say, more truly than thou, that we are at home everywhere, because we set up our wigwams with ease wheresoever we go, and without asking permission of anybody. Thou reproachest us, very inappropriately, that our country is a little hell in contrast with France, which thou comparest to a terrestrial paradise, inasmuch as it yields thee, so thou sayest, every kind of provision in abundance. Thou sayest of us also that we are the most miserable [79] and most unhappy of all men, living without religion, without manners, without honour, without social order, and, in a word, without any rules, like the beasts in our woods and our forests, lacking bread, wine, and a thousand other comforts which thou hast in superfluity in Europe. Well, my brother, if thou dost not yet know the real feelings which our Indians have towards thy country and towards all thy nation, it is proper that I inform thee at once. I beg thee now to believe that, all miserable as we seem in thine eyes, we consider ourselves nevertheless much happier than thou in this, that we are very content with the little that we have; [80] and believe also once for all, I pray, that thou deceivest thyself greatly if thou thinkest to persuade us that thy country is better than ours. For if France, as thou sayest, is a little terrestrial paradise, art thou sensible to leave it? And why abandon wives, children, relatives, and friends? Why risk thy life and thy property every year, and why venture thy-

self with such risk, in any season whatsoever, to the storms and tempests of the sea in order to come to a strange and barbarous country which thou considerest the poorest and least fortunate of the world? Besides, since we are wholly convinced of the contrary, we scarcely take the trouble to go to France, because [81] we fear, with good reason, lest we find little satisfaction there, seeing, in our own experience, that those who are natives thereof leave it every year in order to enrich themselves on our shores. We believe, further, that you are also incomparably poorer than we, and that you are only simple journeymen, valets, servants, and slaves, all masters and grand captains though you may appear, seeing that you glory in our old rags and in our miserable suits of beaver which can no longer be of use to us, and that you find among us, in the fishery for cod which you make in these parts, the wherewithal to comfort your misery and the poverty [82] which oppresses you. As to us, we find all our riches and all our conveniences among ourselves, without trouble and without exposing our lives to the dangers in which you find yourselves constantly through your long voyages. And, whilst feeling compassion for you in the sweetness of our repose, we wonder at the anxieties and cares which you give yourselves night and day in order to load your ship.[1] We see also that all your people live, as a rule, only upon cod which you catch among us. It is everlastingly nothing but cod—cod in the morning, cod at midday, cod at evening, and always cod, until things come to such a pass that if you wish some good morsels, it is at [83] our expense; and you are obliged to have recourse to the Indians, whom you despise so much, and to beg them to go a-hunting that you may be regaled. Now tell me this one little thing, if thou hast any sense: Which of these two is the wisest and happiest—he

[1] That is, with cod. These anxieties and cares, as well indeed as everything connected with the summer fishery for cod, are vividly and fully described by Denys, in the second volume of his well-known *Description.*

who labours without ceasing and only obtains, and that with great trouble, enough to live on, or he who rests in comfort and finds all that he needs in the pleasure of hunting and fishing? It is true," added he, "that we have not always had the use of bread and of wine which your France produces; but, in fact, before the arrival of the French in these parts, did not the Gaspesians live much longer than now? And if we have not [84] any longer among us any of those old men of a hundred and thirty to forty years, it is only because we are gradually adopting your manner of living, for experience is making it very plain that those of us live longest who, despising your bread, your wine, and your brandy, are content with their natural food of beaver, of moose, of waterfowl, and fish, in accord with the custom of our ancestors and of all the Gaspesian nation. Learn now, my brother, once for all, because I must open to thee my heart: there is no Indian who does not consider himself infinitely more happy and more powerful than the French." He finished his speech by the following last words, saying that an Indian could find his living everywhere, and [85] that he could call himself the seigneur and the sovereign of his country, because he could reside there just as freely as it pleased him, with every kind of rights of hunting and fishing, without any anxiety, more content a thousand times in the woods and in his wigwam than if he were in palaces and at the tables of the greatest princes of the earth.

No matter what can be said of this reasoning, I assert, for my part, that I should consider these Indians incomparably more fortunate than ourselves, and that the life of these barbarians would even be capable of inspiring envy, if they had the instructions, the understanding, and the same means for their salvation which God has given us that we may save ourselves by preference [86] over so many poor pagans, and as a result of His pity; for, after all, their lives are not vexed by a thousand annoyances as are ours. They have

not among them those situations or offices, whether in the judiciary or in war, which are sought among us with so much ambition. Possessing nothing of their own, they are consequently free from trickery and legal proceedings in connection with inheritances from their relatives. The names of serjeant, of attorney, of clerk, of judge, of president are unknown to them. All their ambition centres in surprising and killing quantities of beavers, moose, seals, and other wild beasts in order to obtain their flesh for food and their skins for clothing. They live [87] in very great harmony, never quarrelling and never beating one another except in drunkenness. On the contrary, they mutually aid one another in their needs with much charity and without self-seeking. There is continual joy in their wigwams. The multitude of their children does not embarrass them, for, far from being annoyed by these, they consider themselves just that much the more fortunate and richer as their family is more numerous. Since they never expect that the fortunes of the children will be larger than those of their fathers, they are also free from all those anxieties which we give ourselves in connection with the accumulation of property for the purpose of elevating children in society and in importance. Hence it comes about that nature has always [88] preserved among them in all its integrity that conjugal love between husband and wife which ought never to suffer alteration through selfish fear of having too many children. This duty, which in Europe is considered too onerous, is viewed by our Indians as very honourable, very advantageous, and very useful, and he who has the largest number of children is the most highly esteemed of the entire nation. This is because he finds more support for his old age, and because, in their condition of life, the boys and girls contribute equally to the happiness and joy of those who have given them birth. They live, in fact, together—father and children —like the first kings of the earth, who subsisted [89] at the

beginning of the world by their hunting and fishing, and on vegetables and sagamité,[1] or stew, which was, in my opinion, like the pottage which Jacob asked of Esau before giving him his benediction.

[1] A word of Indian (perhaps Ojibway), origin, adopted early by the French, and still in use in Canada. It was applied to a sort of porridge, made principally of boiled corn, but including also other ingredients. The origin of the word is discussed by A. F. Chamberlain in the *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, XV., 1902, 257. Compare also Dionne's *Le Parler Populaire des Canadiens Français*, 587.

## CHAPTER VI

*On the Manner of Life of the Gaspesians, and on their Food.*

IT is certainly true that our Gaspesians had so little knowledge of bread and wine when the French arrived for the first time in their country, that these barbarians mistook the bread which was given them for a piece of [90] birch tinder, and became convinced that the French were equally cruel and inhuman, since in their amusements, said the Indians, they drank blood without repugnance. It was thus they designated wine. Therefore they remained some time not only without tasting it, but even without wishing to become in any manner intimate, or to hold intercourse, with a nation which they believed to be accustomed to blood and carnage. Nevertheless, in the end, they became accustomed gradually to this drink, and it were to be wished that they had still to-day the same horror of wine and brandy, for they drink it even to drunkenness, to the prejudice of their salvation and of Christianity ; and it makes them commit [91] cruelties much greater than those which they had imagined in the conduct of the French.

Many persons without doubt are surprised that, and have difficulty in understanding how, a missionary can live whole years together in the Indian manner. I admit frankly that he experiences very fully the vexations of this life, especially at first, when these are always very trying. But one soon overcomes all repugnance towards it when one has such good and succulent meats as those of moose, of beaver, of seal, of porcupine, of partridge, of wild goose, of teal, of ducks, of snipe, of cod

[92] of salmon, of bass, of trout, and of plenty of other fish and of waterfowl which serve as the usual food of the Indians.

The months of January and February are for these barbarians, as a rule, a time of involuntary penitence and very rigorous fasting, which is also often very sad as well, in view of the cruel and horrible results which it causes among them. Nevertheless they could very easily prevent its unfortunate consequences if they would but follow the example of the ants, and of the little squirrels, which, by an instinct as admirable as it is natural, accumulate with care in summer the wherewithal to subsist in plenty during the winter. But, after all, [93] our Gaspesians are of those people who take no thought for the morrow, though this is much more because of laziness in collecting good provisions than through zeal in obeying the counsel which God has given thereon in His Holy Gospel. They are convinced that fifteen to twenty lumps of meat, or of fish dried or cured[1] in the smoke, are more than enough to support them for the space of five to six months. Since, however, they are a people of good appetite, they consume their provisions very much sooner than they expect. This exposes them often to the danger of dying from hunger, through lack of the provision which they could easily possess in abundance if they would only take the trouble to gather it. But these [94] barbarians, being wanderers and vagabonds, do not plough the ground, nor do they harvest Indian corn, or peas, or pumpkins, as do the Iroquois, the Hurons, the Algomquins, and several other nations of Canada. In consequence they are sometimes reduced to so great need that they have neither the strength nor the spirit to leave their wigwams in order to go seek in the woods the wherewithal for living. It is then impossible to behold without compassion the innocent children, who, being nothing more than skin and bone, exhibit clearly

[1] This word in the original is *boucannés*, which Littré, *Dictionnaire*, gives as French, derived from a West Indian tongue.

enough in their wholly emaciated faces and in their living skeletons, the cruel hunger which they are suffering through the negligence of their fathers and mothers, who find [95] themselves obliged, along with their unhappy children, to eat curdled blood, scrapings of skin, old moccasins, and a thousand other things incompatible with the life of man. All this would be little if they did not come sometimes to other extremes far more affecting and horrible.

It is surprising to learn that they find themselves often reduced to extremities so great and so cruel that one cannot even hear of them without shuddering, and nature cannot endure them without horror. We have seen a sufficiently deplorable example thereof at the River of Sainte Croix, otherwise called Miramichis, in the month of January 1680,[1] when our Indians consumed all their meat [96] and their smoked fish much sooner than they had expected. Matters reached such a pass that, since the season was not yet suitable for hunting, nor the rivers in condition for fishing, they found themselves reduced to suffer all the worst that can be experienced in a famine, which resulted in their deaths to the number of forty or fifty. The French who were then at the Fort of Sainte Croix, aided them as much as they could at a juncture when the obligation to aid one's neighbour, whom the Gospel commands us to love as ourselves, appeared too obvious not to be discharged with all the compassion and the charity possible. Madame Denis[2] [97] gave orders to her

[1] Our author's phraseology appears to imply that he was himself present at Miramichi at this time. But the autograph certificate, reproduced in the Introduction, shows that he was near Quebec on February 2nd, and therefore, pretty surely, was not at Miramichi in January.

[2] Madame Denis I take to be not the wife of Richard Denys de Fronsac, but his mother, the wife of Nicolas Denys who was then in France. It is known that Richard's first wife was an Indian woman, Anne Parabego, or Partarabego (Tanguay, *Dictionnaire généalogique*, III. 342, and *Collections of the New Brunswick Historical Society*, III. 14) and that their eldest child was Marie Anne, baptized May 25, 1681, aged four months. This would imply that Richard was married the preceding year later than January. And even

servants to distribute to the Indians, according to the needs of each wigwam, bread, flour, peas, meat, fish, and even also corn. This latter was boiled by the more patient of these poor famished creatures, but some others of them, unable to endure longer the cruel hunger which overwhelmed them, ate it quite raw, and with this result, that a poor woman having died immediately after this repast, which was the last of her life, there was surprise the following autumn when several fine heads of corn, which had come to complete maturity, were seen at the very place where this Indian woman had been buried. We could not give any [98] other explanation thereof than the following, which seemed to us the most exact and most probable, namely, that it resulted necessarily from the fact that this corn, which she had eaten wholly raw, had germinated in her body; and her stomach not having had enough either of strength or of natural heat for digesting it, the corn had come to maturity. This seems very probable, since, in fact, no one had ever sown grain in this place.

In a depression so great, and a desolation so general, which afflicted greatly both the French and the Indians, one of our Gaspesians was found, who, unable to endure any longer the hunger which was devouring him alive, was so barbarous and cruel as to resolve to kill and to eat [99] his wife. She, perceiving the sinister design of her husband, and in order to save her own life, put it into his mind to break the heads and cut the throats of two of their children, one aged

if he were married in January 1680, it is quite unlikely that his Indian wife would have been allowed the authority which Madame Denis evidently possessed. Moreover, we know that the wife of Nicolas Denys had been in charge of his fort at Nepisiguit all one winter during his absence (Denys, *Description*, I. 123), which shows her capacity for such a post. Furthermore, both Father le Clercq and his contemporary, Monseigneur de Saint Valier, refer to Richard Denys always by his title of Fronsac, and call Nicolas simply Monsieur Denis, which is another good reason for considering Madame Denis as the mother of Richard.

five to six years, and the other seven to eight. "It is true," said this cruel hard-hearted mother to her husband, her heart all pierced with grief, "that thou hast cause to complain, and that the need in which we are is extreme ; but in fact if thou wilt kill some member of thy family, is it not much better that we put to death some of our children, and that we eat them together, in order that I may be able to rear and to support the smaller ones who can no longer live if once they come to lose their mother ?" She pleaded her cause in her own favour so well [100] that with common consent the man and his wife slew, by cutting their throats, these two poor innocents, paying no attention to the tears and the lamentations of the little girl, who implored her father and mother not to murder her. She was not able to obtain this favour from these inhuman monsters, and both children received their death from those who had given them life. They then cut the bodies of these children into pieces, and placed them in a boiling kettle ; and finally, with unheard of cruelty, the simple recollection of which makes the Gaspesian nation shudder to this very day, these monsters of nature ate them, in company with one of their [101] brothers, who was obliged to flee with the others to the River of Saint Jean, for fear lest the leading men of our Indians, surprising them in this cruel feast, might break their heads. And in fact these leading men were as much exasperated as surprised at the news of a deed so black and so barbarous. It is true that these unhappy persons, on the return of Spring, which proved very favourable for hunting, were inconsolable for the miserable nature of the death of their children, whom they had inhumanly sacrificed for the preservation of their own lives. They deserved, through their cries, to touch with compassion the hardest hearts. The father reproached the mother with the excess of her cruelty ; the wife represented to her husband [102] how little endurance he had in suffering hunger, and how unnatural he had been in his willingness to preserve his own

life at the expense of that which they had both given to their children. This poor afflicted mother, with tears in her eyes and with sighs and groans sufficient to melt a heart of bronze, reproached him that he alone had forced her, despite herself, to consent to a deed so brutal and so barbarous. But, after having lamented mutually the misfortune they had brought on themselves, and for which there was no remedy, and the irreparable loss of their dear children, whose names they still repeated in the midst of their lamentations, they could not find tears enough, nor words to condemn and to express [103] on their own behalf the enormity of their crime. I have myself seen these unfortunate parents, who had still, like other Cains, the frightful image of their abominable crime so constantly present in their minds that every moment they believed themselves struck by the same curse which God inflicted upon that fratricide. Affrighted as they were without ceasing by a terror which never left them, they imagined that they saw as many executioners as they met Indians; and, being unable to find safety in any place where they could escape the just anger of our Gaspesians, who could no longer look upon them except with horror and indignation, they travelled the woods day and night without ceasing, seeking [104] everywhere in vain for a rest which they could find in no place, and still less in the depths of their consciences. These tormented and persecuted them continually with so much cruelty at the sole recollection of the horror of the crime which they had just perpetrated, that they believed themselves wholly unworthy to receive the leaflets and the characters[1] which I gave to the other Indians, and of which I made use to good effect in teaching them the prayers, the catechism, and the principles of the faith I was preaching to them. When I perceived that they no longer dared to appear, and that they ceased to attend the instruction with

[1] These are mentioned in Chapter I. page 28, and are fully explained in Chapter VII. and in the Introduction to this volume, page 21.

the others, I tried to reassure them and to persuade them [105] to come to our chapel to hear there the prayers. They answered me that this was useless ; for whatever efforts they were able to make, said they, to understand that which I taught them, they had no longer either the memory or the ability to remember it until this crime was entirely removed and pardoned by God through the ministry of the grand Patriarch. It is thus that they call Monseigneur the Bishop of Quebec ; and they wished, said they, to cast themselves at his feet, in order to obtain from him absolution for their crime.

Such were the words and the feelings of these poor unhappy persons. I did all in my power to console them,[1] promising them all the protection and the aid that I [106] could, and representing to them that while in truth their crime was monstrous, yet in fact God had more goodness and compassion for them than they had of wickedness and cruelty in thus putting to death those to whom they had given life. They believed in my words, and received my leaflets, well resolved to do and to practise exactly everything with which I could inspire them of good, in order to appease the justice of God and to invite His mercy.

Such are the grievous accidents to which, without doubt, our Indians expose themselves every year by their laziness, and by the little care that they take to accumulate in summer enough to enable them to avoid and prevent a thousand [107] ills which very often overwhelm them in winter, as they themselves know only too well through the sad experience which they have had thereof. These Gaspesians quite agree with us, but it seems as if the abundance which they find in spring, summer, and autumn makes them

[1] Father le Clercq's personal knowledge of this case of cannibalism among the Micmacs places it beyond question. He describes another, and nearly as authentic a case, caused, however, by a very different motive, upon page 341 of his book. A case is also reported, but upon hearsay, by Father le Jeune (*Jesuit Relations*, Thwaites' edition, VIII. 29).

forget the misfortunes which they have suffered during the winter.

After all, I declare that one cannot sufficiently admire the fortitude with which they endure the hardships of hunger, and it can be said that they fast with perhaps as much, or even with more, patience and austerity than the most rigid and the most self-mortifying of the anchorites. It is somewhat surprising to see that they [108] make an entire occupation of singing immoderately, and of dancing sometimes like fools, when they have a consuming appetite, and when they have nothing with which to satisfy it. This they do in order to lose, say they, through this amusement, the desire which they would have for eating. It is not difficult for them to go three or four days without food, especially when they are hunting, and are chasing some wild beasts, such as the moose. They never take any meal before this exercise, however severe it may be for them. But in the evening, when they return to the wigwam, they regale themselves with all the best that there is, boiling, frying or roasting, according to the taste of each, [109] all that they have, without any reserve, and without any apprehension lest any one count their pieces. On the contrary, these barbarians consider that it is a very praiseworthy and glorious thing to eat a great deal. This is why, not being able to submit to rules of temperance and of economy, which nevertheless would be very useful and invaluable to them, they make all their good to consist, and find their happiness, in eating to excess, in granting to their appetite beyond that which it desires, and in eating as they please, as well by day as by night, making a perfect pleasure and happiness of their bellies. Hence it is a proverb among us in Canada, that it needs only four or five good [110] meals to restore them from the fatigues and the weakness of several months of illness.

They preserve inviolably among them the manner of living which was in vogue during the golden age, and those

who imagine a Gaspesian Indian as a monster of nature will understand only with difficulty the charity with which they mutually comfort one another. The strong take pleasure in supporting the feeble; and those who by their hunting procure many furs, give some in charity to those who have none, either in order to pay the debts of these, or to clothe them, or to obtain for them the necessaries of life. Widows and orphans receive presents, and if there is any widow who [111] is unable to support her children, the old men take charge of them, and distribute and give them to the best hunters,[1] with whom they live, neither more nor less than as if they were the actual children of the wigwam. It would be a shame, and a kind of fault worthy of eternal reproach, if it was known that an Indian, when he had provisions in abundance, did not make gift thereof to those whom he knew to be in want and in need. This is why those who kill the first moose at the beginning of January or February, a time at which those people suffer greatly, since they have consumed all their provisions, make it a pleasure to carry some of it themselves very promptly to [112] those who have none, even if these are distant fifteen to twenty leagues. And, not content with this liberality, they invite these latter also, with all possible tenderness, to join their company and to remove closer to their wigwams, in order that they may be able to aid these people more conveniently in their necessity and in their most pressing need, giving a thousand promises to share with them the half of their hunting. This is good example, without doubt, for those pitiless rich, and those hearts of stone, who have only bowels of iron for their like, and who never take any trouble whatever to relieve the extreme misery of so many poor persons who are in anguish, and who suffer hunger and [113] nakedness, whilst these wicked rich wallow in a superabundance of property and riches, of which Providence has made them only trustees,

[1] This matter is mentioned by our author also on page 388 of his book.

and which he has placed in their hands only in order that they may make a holy use of them as alms and charity to the needy members of the Saviour.

The meat of moose is that which our Gaspesians esteem the most. They are fond of its grease, and consider a dish thereof so delicious that they drink it wholly pure, with as much gusto as if it were the most pleasing liquor in the world. They eat it also quite raw as something exquisite. In a word, they have not among them any feast more magnificent than that in which he who entertains gives to his guests [114] a loaf of cacamos[1] of nine to ten pounds. Now this loaf is a kind of grease which is taken from the bones of the legs and thighs of the moose. After they have eaten all the marrow, they pound and crush these bones until they have reduced them almost to powder ; then the fragments are placed in a huge kettle of boiling water, so that every remaining trace of marrow or grease in these broken bones floats upon the water because drawn out by the heat of the fire. They then collect this grease, and preserve it carefully, as something very choice and delicate. As to the soup, it becomes as white as milk, and according to their idea, they believe it as good for the chest as a [115] large glass of brandy, or as the best of our meat broths. They value the female moose much higher than the male during the winter, but, on the other hand, they esteem the male much more than the female in summer. This is because these animals are alternately fat and lean, for it is not their nature or their disposition to be in the same condition at the same time, something which is also very common with several other kinds of animals in Canada.[2]

If by good luck it happens that a hunter kills a female in

[1] This word is used also by Denys (*Description*, II. 412) in the form *Cacamo ;* and he tells us the French called it moose-butter (*beurre d'Orignac*). The word in modern Micmac is *Kŭmoo*, which Rand gives as meaning "a cake of tallow" (*English-Micmac Dictionary*, 261), though our anthor's word has evidently also a prefix, which I cannot identify.

[2] No such peculiarity appears to be recognised by our naturalists to-day.

winter, or a male during the summer, there is then the greatest rejoicing in all the neighbouring wigwams, because of the expectation and hope that each one has of [116] eating delectably some fat of moose. But they redouble their joy, with cries and songs of gladness, when the hunter, all victorious from the chase, enters into the wigwam, and throws upon the ground, with a gravity and pride as though he had triumphed over a redoubtable enemy, the load he had carried upon his shoulders, in which are enwrapped the heart, the kidney, the tongue, the entrails, and the most delicate fat. On these parts his friends and all his family begin forthwith to regale themselves, whilst the girls and the women, with a thousand demonstrations of joy, and always singing and dancing, go to fetch upon their sledges the remainder of the meat of the moose, which this proud [117] hunter has left very neatly buried in the snow.

It falls to the mistress of the wigwam to take charge of everything which is brought back from the hunting, if, indeed, it can be said that any system prevails among these people, who are eating nearly every moment. She selects from the mass of intestines of this animal those which are the fattest; these she boils, after having washed them very lightly, and she makes them finally into rolls, much like puddings and sausages. From these they make as a rule their most delicious desserts. She then cuts all the leanest and thinnest parts into slices, and preserves them by drying in the smoke, placing them upon [118] poles which form a kind of little staging. This is in order to prevent the meat from spoiling and rotting. It is by this means that, without the use of salt, or any other spices, they preserve it very readily for some time, and it becomes to them later, as I have already said, of very great use in the extremities to which these poor wretches, in default of foresight, fall only too often. It can be said that the smoked nose and tongue of the moose are wonderfully good; but it is still somewhat better, and markedly more delicate,

not only to the taste of our Indians, but also to that of our French, and of all the other nations which are in Canada, when both are eaten [119] quite fresh, and without having been exposed to the smoke. These parts form therefore the feast excellent above all to our Gaspesians. They also sometimes roast, as a diversion, the entire head of a young elk, which they commonly call in their tongue *Nigaiou*.[1] They do not remove therefrom either the nose or the tongue ; but simply, without other arrangement, they attach to some pole a cord by which this head is hung directly in front of the fire, so that by giving it from time to time a twist with a stick, it turns and re-turns to the right and the left without burning until it is cooked.[2] There is, further, nothing so ludicrous as to see the fireplace besieged, so to speak, by as many [120] portions of meat, spitted upon as many sticks, as there are Indians in the wigwam. But, unable to possess themselves in patience until the meat is entirely roasted, the Indians snatch it half cooked from the spit, and eat it just as gluttonously as do the dogs, and with a surprising greediness which would be capable of disgusting the hungriest persons. Such is all the outfit which these barbarians use in their usual repasts, nor do they desire either tablecloths, napkins, tables, dishes, plates or forks.

Many find it difficult to understand the manner in which the Indians boiled their meat before they were given the use of our kettles, which they now find [121] extremely convenient. I have learned from themselves that before they obtained our kettles, they used little buckets or troughs of wood,[3] which

[1] This word is obviously the same as the modern Micmac *Negeĕjoo*, to which Rand gives the meaning "a yearling moose" (*English-Micmac Dictionary*, 172). The resemblance is otherwise so close as to suggest that our author's word is misprinted from *Nigajou*.

[2] This method, used to prevent the burning of meat in cooking, is also described, and somewhat more fully, by Denys (*Description*, II. 358).

[3] A full account of these wooden kettles, with some interesting statements about their use, is given by Denys (*Description*, II. 359, 372, 464). Lescarbot also mentions them (*Histoire*, 805).

they filled with water; into this they threw glowing stones, which they made red hot in the fire, and they did this so often, that little by little the water grew warm, and finally boiled by virtue of the warmth and the heat of these hot rocks, until the meat was amply cooked for eating in the Indian manner, that is to say, half raw, as they eat it still to this day, and in a manner also wholly disgusting. For it is true that these people are distinguished in their manner of living by an uncleanness which turns the stomach. I cannot believe [122] that there is any nation in the world so disgusting in its manners of drinking and eating as the Gaspesian, excepting, perhaps, some other peoples of this new world. Hence it is true that of all the troubles which the missionaries suffer at first in order to accustom themselves to the manner of life of the Indians for the sake of instructing them in the maxims of Christianity, this is without doubt one of the most difficult to endure, because it very often causes a rising of the stomach. Our Gaspesians never clean their kettles except the first time they use them, because, they say, they are afraid of the verdigris, which is in no danger of attaching itself to them, when they are well greased [123] and burnt. Nor do they ever skim it off, because it seems to them that this is removing grease from the pot, and just so much good material is lost. This causes the meat to be all stuffed with a black and thick scum, like little meat balls which have nearly the appearance of curdled milk. They content themselves with removing simply the largest moose hairs, although the meat may have been dragged around the wigwam for five or six days, and the dogs also may have tasted it beforehand. They have no other tables than the flat ground, nor other napkins for wiping their hands than their moccasins, or their hair, on which they sedulously rub their hands. In a word there is nothing that [124] is not rough, gross and repellent in the extraordinary manner of life of these barbarians, who observe

neither in drinking nor in eating any rules of politeness or of civility.

The usual drink of our Gaspesians is pure water, which they drink with pleasure during the summer.[1] As for the winter, they are very often obliged to melt snow in their kettles in order to have water to drink, and this nearly always tastes of smoke. As to the water of the maple, which is the sap of that same tree, it is equally delicious to French and Indians, who take their fill of it in spring. It is true also that it is very pleasing and abundant in Gaspesia, for, through a [125] very little opening which is made with an axe in a maple, ten to a dozen half-gallons may run out. A thing which has seemed to me very remarkable in the maple water is this, that if, by virtue of boiling, it is reduced to a third, it becomes a real syrup, which hardens to something like sugar, and takes on a reddish colour.[2] It is formed into little

[1] But Denys says they drank little pure water (*Description*, II. 362).

[2] This is one of the earliest references to maple sugar in literature, and those which precede it are very few. Joutel, in his Journal of 1688, mentions it (Margry's *Découvertes et Établissements des Français*, III. 510, cited, with other references, by W. H. Henshaw in the *American Anthropologist*, III., 1890, 341). In 1685 a note on "A sort of Sugar made of the Juice of the Maple, in Canada" appeared in the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*, XV. 988. A year earlier, according to an article by A. F. Chamberlain in the *American Anthropologist*, IV., 1891, 39 and 381, there appeared in the *Philosophical Magazine*, I. 322, a letter, of date March 10, 1684, which speaks of "some sugar of the first boiling got from the juice of the wounded maple." And this is the very earliest known reference to maple sugar. But, curiously enough, references to the use of maple sap go back far earlier. Thus Denys, in 1672, has a description of the tapping of trees and the use of the sap as a favourite drink of both Indians and French, but no mention of sugar (*Description*, II. 317). There is a mention of maple water in the *Jesuit Relations* of 1671–72 (Thwaites' edition, LVI. 101). Sagard mentions it in 1636 as a supposed remedy for certain ills, including weakness of the stomach, though he makes the error of attributing the sap to the *fouteau*, *i.e.* the beech (*Histoire du Canada*, 227). It is this account of Sagard's which is cited by our author in his other book (*First Establishment of the Faith*, I. 208). Finally, the earliest reference I have found is given by Father le Jeune in the *Relation* of 1634, and it is of particular interest as showing the way in which the use of the sap probably first originated. "When they are pressed by famine, they eat the shavings or bark of a certain tree, which they call *Michtan*,

loaves which are sent to France as a curiosity, and which in actual use serve very often as a substitute for French sugar. I have several times mixed it with brandy, cloves and cinnamon, and this makes a kind of very agreeable rossolis. The observation is worthy of note that there must be snow at the foot of the tree in order that it shall let [126] its sweet water run; and it refuses to yield this liquid when the snow appears no more upon the ground.[1] But, to conclude, all I can say of the water of Canada in general is this, that it

which they split in the spring to get from it a juice, sweet as honey or as sugar; I have been much told of this by several, but they do not enjoy much of it, so scanty is the flow" (Thwaites' edition, VI. 273).

It is generally believed, from statements contained in the later literature, which is cited by Henshaw and by Chamberlain in their notes above mentioned, that the making of maple sugar originated in pre-historic times with the Indians, and was learned by the French from them. Thus the note in the *Philosophical Transactions* above cited states, "The Savages have practised this Art longer than any now living among them can remember"; while both Henshaw and Chamberlain give much evidence, drawn from the Indian terms applied to the sugar and its making, all tending to the same conclusion. Yet if maple sugar making was aboriginal and in existence long prior to the earliest mentions of it, it is very difficult to understand how it could have escaped mention in the many minute accounts of Indian life given not only in the *Jesuit Relations* but in many other writings besides; and the omission becomes quite incomprehensible in the face of the fact that the maple sap is so often mentioned. It looks very much as if the making of the sugar were not pre-historic, but, though of Indian origin, was not commenced until about 1675. Indeed, its beginning may be connected with the extensive introduction of metal kettles, for the boiling of the sap to sugar in the aboriginal troughs heated with hot stones must have been not only a too-trying process for aboriginal industry, but one rather unlikely to have been hit upon by any of the known aboriginal housekeeping arrangements. It would seem most likely that the use of the sap was first discovered by some such incident as that mentioned by Father le Jeune, that is, the use for food in times of scarcity of the sweet young bark, cambium, and wood. These are yielded by many trees, but it would soon have been found that the maple was superior to all others, both in abundance and richness of sap. From this to the splitting, and then the tapping, of the tree the steps would be easy and natural. Finally, the boiling of some sap caught in a kettle and accidentally mistaken for water would lead to the natural discovery of the sugar.

[1] Our author's observation on this point is not accurate as he gives it, though it embodies a germ of truth.

is extremely healthful and beneficent, and much better than that in France. Never, or at least very rarely, is one inconvenienced by it, according to the experience which I have had with it myself during several years. Hence we say in Canada that the waters of New France are as good as the sour wine of Europe.

[127] CHAPTER VII

*On the Ignorance of the Gaspesians*

THE Gaspesians do not know how to read nor how to write. They have, nevertheless, enough understanding and memory to learn how to do both if only they were willing to give the necessary application. But aside from the fickleness and instability of their minds, which they are willing to apply only in so far as it pleases them, they all have the false and ridiculous belief that they would not live long if they were as learned as the French. From this it comes that they are pleased to live and to die in their natural ignorance. [128] Some of these Indians, however, for whose instruction some trouble has been taken, have in a short time become philosophers and even pretty good theologians. But, after all, they have ever remained savages, since they have not had the sense to profit by their considerable advantages, of which they have rendered themselves wholly unworthy by leaving their studies in order to dwell with their fellow-countrymen in the woods, where they have lived like very bad philosophers, preferring, on the basis of a foolish reasoning, the savage to the French life.

I have met, in my mission, two daughters of our Gaspesians who knew how to read and write, because they had lived with the Ursulines [129] of Quebec, who, sacredly animated by that all-fiery zeal which they exhibit for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, receive among them the little daughters of the Indians, whom they teach with piety and devotion not only how to read and write, but also how to perform other tasks suited to their condition of life.

The facility which I have found in a method for teaching the prayers to our Gaspesians by means of certain characters which I have formed,[1] fully persuades me that the majority would soon become educated; for, in fact, I should find no more difficulty in teaching them to read than to pray to God by means of my papers, in which each arbitrary letter signifies a particular word [130] and sometimes even two together. They have so much readiness in understanding this kind of writing that they learn in a single day what they would never have been able to grasp in an entire week without the aid of these leaflets, which they call *Kignamotinoer*, ou *Kateguenne*.[2] They preserve these instructive papers with so much care, and they have for them so particular an esteem, that they keep them very neatly in little cases of birch-bark bedecked with wampum, with beadwork, and with porcupine quills. They hold them between their hands, as we do our prayer-books, during the Holy Mass, after which they shut them up again in their cases. The principal advantage and usefulness which results from this new [131] method is this, that the Indians instruct one another in whatsoever place they may happen to be. Thus the son teaches his father, the mother her children, the wife her husband, and the children the old men; for advanced age gives them no reluctance to learn from their little nephews, and even from the girls, the principles of Christianity. Even some of the youngest Indians, those who

[1] These characters, called commonly hieroglyphics, are mentioned by our author earlier in his book at pages 28 and 104, and later at pages 139–151 and 534. They are discussed in the Introduction to this volume, pages 21–32.

[2] These words occur also on pages 148, 151, and 534, with somewhat different spellings, but in all these cases with the *ou* an integral part of the *Kateguenne*, showing that it is here misprinted as a separate word and in Roman type. The *Oukateguenne* is obviously the same as the modern Micmac *Weegădigŭn*, meaning "a book" (Rand, *English-Micmac Dictionary*, 41). The *Kignamotinoer*, which on page 151 is spelled *Kignatimonoër*, is no doubt a form, more or less misprinted, of the modern Micmac *Kĕgenoodŭmooā'* which means "to teach" or "to instruct" (Rand, *English-Micmac Dictionary*, 146, 262). Our author himself speaks of these writings as "instructive papers," seemingly in translation of the phrase.

do not yet possess the entire use of speech, pronounce, nevertheless, the best that they can, some words from these leaflets which they hear spoken in their wigwams when the Indians, by a holy emulation, read them and repeat them together. Admiration has often [132] and justly been expressed in our monastery at Quebec for a little child about seven years of age, who read distinctly in his book the prayers that I had taught him during my mission. He deciphered the characters with so much ease and presence of mind that our religious, as well as the seculars, were extraordinarily surprised thereat. They were no less edified at seeing the father and mother assisting at the Holy Mass, having in their hands their Gaspesian prayer-books in which were the instructions that a good Christian ought to know in order to assist with merit in this august sacrifice. These poor Indians, who had adopted me, with their usual ceremonies, as their child, had come from more [133] than a hundred and fifty leagues distance on purpose to beg me to return as quickly as possible with them. It was only two months since I had arrived at Quebec for the purpose of reporting to the Reverend Father Valentine le Roux, then our Commissary and Superior, and now Custodian of the Recollects of the Province of Saint Denis in France, upon the missions of Gaspesia, Isle Percée, Ristigouche, Nipisiquis and Mizamichis, which obedience had confided to my care. It is true that I had been obliged to remain in our Monastery of Notre-Dame des Anges a longer time than I had expected, because the Reverend Father Commissary was not there when I arrived.

The same zeal which he has [134] always exhibited, with so much ardour and success, for the glory of God, the salvation of souls, the service of the King, and the honour of our holy reform during the six years in which he governed our missions of New France, had obliged him to embark in one of the canoes of Monsieur le Comte de Frontenac, whom he had the honour to accompany as far as the fort of the same name at

a hundred and twenty leagues from Quebec. He went there in order to animate, by his words and by his example, the Reverend Fathers Gabriel de la Ribourd, Zenobe Membré, and Loüis Hennepin, whom he had assigned to make, along with Monsieur de la Salle, the famous discovery of the Gulf of Mexico by way of the rivers of Saint Lawrence and of Missipé, [135] or to go there himself, quite the first, if there had been need of that, to share with them the apostolic labours which had to be maintained in this glorious enterprise.

He was, however, keenly disappointed not to find our missionaries still at Fort Frontenac, for they had already set out for the discovery of the Gulf of Mexico. So that, after having done in this mission everything of good to which his zeal inspired him, and having given the necessary directions to the Reverend Father Luc Buisset, Recollect, who had remained alone at the fort for the instruction of the French and the Indians, he descended with Monsieur le Comte de Frontenac to Quebec, and returned to our Monastery of Notre-Dame des Anges.

[136] I then represented to him, with that affectionate confidence which his goodness and his natural sweetness inspired in all missionaries, that which I thought likely to advance the glory of God and the salvation of souls in all these missions. He heard with favour my proposals upon these matters, and I can say with truth that this voyage which I made to Quebec had all the success that I could hope from it. So that, after having made spiritual exercises under his direction, in order to receive therefrom the knowledge and the strength necessary to make me acquit myself worthily in my ministry, I had already made my arrangements to set out when our Indians appeared at Quebec.[1]

[1] Apparently it should be very easy to fix the year of this visit of our author to Quebec and his return with his impatient Indians to Restigouche. The journey of Father le Roux, with which he links his visit chronologically, seems to have occurred late in the summer of 1679, for that is the statement in our author's other book (*First Establishment of the Faith*, II. 112), and t accords

Whatever inclination, however, I might have had to remain [137] some days longer in our retreat of Notre-Dame des Anges, it was necessary for me to yield to the persuasions of my Indians, to whom, when leaving them, I had promised that I would return in a moon and a half, that is to say, in six weeks.

Keenly grieved as they were by my absence, and seeing that this period which I had stated to them was already expired, the leaders decided with one accord to send two canoes for me, with orders to the Indians, who were their deputies for the purpose, to testify to me the great desire they had that I should return as promptly as possible, and to ask of me whether the moons at Quebec were longer than those of Ristigouche. The latter was the place where I [138] then made my mission. I could not defend myself against the importunities which these deputies made to me in order to

best with the known dates of the departure of La Salle's expedition from Fort Frontenac. (Compare also a note on page 203 of this volume.) From these data Father le Clercq's visit, and his return to Restigouche, would appear to have occurred late in the autumn of 1679. But, on the other hand, he seems to have spent the winter of 1679-80 at Quebec, for, as shown in the Introduction to this volume (page 7), on October 30th he was present at Saint Anne de Beaupré, and on February 2nd at Coste de Saint Ange, also near Quebec. It is wholly unlikely that he returned to Restigouche in the late autumn and then came back to Quebec for the winter. He had been specially invited, indeed, by Father le Roux to spend that winter in Quebec (letter on page 301 of the *Nouvelle Relation*, page 203 of this volume). It does not help matters to place the voyage of Father le Roux in 1680, because it was unquestionably in the summer of 1680 that our author returned to France, as shown in the note on page 321 of this volume. I believe, therefore, and Fathers Hugolin and Odoric are inclined also to this view, that our author's memory played him false when it made him associate his own visit to Quebec with the voyage of Father le Roux to Fort Frontenac in 1679, and that this visit really occurred in another year when he found Father le Roux absent upon some other voyage. Possibly the visit was really one which he made in the preceding year (1678), when, as Father le Roux's letter appears to show (in the *Nouvelle Relation*, 281, and page 195 of this volume), he had also visited Quebec. But the proficiency of his Indians in the use of the characters, which our author had invented only in 1677, would seem to place the visit later, in which case it could only have occurred some time after his journey to France, and, therefore, in 1682 or later.

oblige me to hasten my return, and, following much more the claim of duty than my natural inclinations, which inspired me strongly to enjoy some time longer the company of my brothers, I embarked at length with pleasure in their canoes. After fifteen days of successful navigation we arrived at the wigwams of our Indians, who received me with so much cordiality, affection and tenderness, that they made both public and individual feasts, with the usual speeches and rejoicings, in order to testify to me, so far as they were able to do it, the joy which they had in my [139] return. How agreeably I was surprised, and what consolation I felt in my heart, when, wishing to present some of my papers to certain Indians who had come from a long distance on purpose to be instructed, I found they could already decipher the characters with as much ease as if they had always lived among us. This was because some whom I had formerly instructed had returned to their homes and had taught the others, thus performing, in regard to them, the office of missionary.

It is easy then, from this, to judge the utility of these characters for a missionary who wishes to garner much fruit in a little time through all the extent of his district. For however little memory [140] these Indians may have, they can not only readily learn their prayers by aid of these characters, but it is also easy after they have forgotten the prayers to recall them by enumerating the characters one after another in the manner they have been shown.

In fact, I have employed them so usefully for the space of ten years, that if the merit of obedience should appoint me to the numerous Missions of the Gulf of Mexico, newly discovered by our religious who have had the honour to accompany Monsieur de la Salle in that glorious enterprise (as I demonstrate in the *First Establishment of the Faith in New France*), I should present them to those barbarians as the [141] most effective means for instructing them in a very short time in the most holy truths of our Christianity.

Our Lord inspired me with the idea of them the second year of my mission, when, being much embarrassed as to the method by which I should teach the Indians to pray to God, I noticed that some children were making marks with charcoal upon birch-bark, and were counting these with the finger very accurately at each word of prayers which they pronounced. This made me believe that by giving them some formulary, which would aid their memory by definite characters, I should advance much more quickly than by teaching them through the method of making them repeat a number of times that [142] which I said to them. I was charmed to find that I was not mistaken, and that these characters which I had formed upon paper produced all the effect that I could wish, so that in a few days they learned without difficulty all of their prayers. I cannot express to you with what ardour these poor Indians competed against one another, with an emulation worthy of praise, as to which would be the most learned and most clever. It is true that it costs much time and trouble to form as many of them as they ask, and especially since I have enlarged the number in order to teach them all the prayers of the Church, with the sacred mysteries of the Trinity, of the Incarnation, [143] of the Baptism, of the Penitence and of the Eucharist. But indeed, what ought we not to do for God? And what matters it, I pray you, at what and in what manner we employ our time, provided that the Lord is glorified, and that one promotes with His glory the salvation of souls, by explaining with Christian simplicity the mysteries of our religion to sundry poor Indians who have spent sixty to eighty years without ever having once during their lives invoked the sacred name of the Lord? It is by such means that these evangelical workers snatch away from the gates of Hell numbers of souls which would never have enjoyed a blissful eternity without the charitable aid of these generous missionaries.

[144] As I have sought in this little formulary only the good of my Indians, and the readiest and easiest method for instructing them, I have used it always with so much the more pleasure because several persons of merit and virtue have been pleased, both orally and by letters, to exhort me to persevere. And they have even obliged me to send examples to them in France, in order to exhibit to the curious a new method of learning to read, and the way God makes use of the smallest things in order to manifest the glory of his holy name to these peoples of Gaspesia.[1] The approbation of Monseigneur de Saint Valier, at present Bishop of Quebec, has more than sufficiently authorised the use of them. And this worthy [145] prelate has acquired so much esteem for them, that after having recognised for himself their advantages and usefulness in the very arduous voyage which he made to la Cadie,[2] he was pleased to ask samples of them from the Reverend Father Moreau,[3] to whom I had communicated them several years before. His Grandeur received with pleasure, from this zealous missionary, our leaflets and our instructive characters, in order to give them to one of his

[1] Other references to these characters, commonly called Micmac hieroglyphics, occur on pages 28, 104, 129, 534 of our author's book, and their history is somewhat fully discussed in the Introduction to the present volume (pages 21–32).

[2] This voyage was made in 1686, and is described in Monseigneur de Saint Valier's well-known book, *Estat present de l'Eglise et de la Colonie Françoise dans la Nouvelle France*, Paris, 1688. Some citations therefrom are given on later pages of the present volume (158, 180, 189).

[3] Father Moreau's particular interest in this matter is explained by the fact that he also was a missionary to the Micmacs. He came to Canada, apparently, as one of the four priests who arrived in the autumn of 1671 (*First Establishment of the Faith*, II. 74); he served first at Three Rivers (*ibid.*, 81, 96), and in 1675 went to Acadia where, with Beaubassin (Chignecto) as a centre, he ministered to Indians and French (*ibid.*, 97). It was in 1680 that he took our author's place temporarily in the Percée mission, as this book shows (under page 553); and he was Father le Clercq's successor in the Baie des Chaleurs part of the mission at least, as records in the Palace of the Bishop of Quebec fully attest. He is also mentioned by our author on pages 182 and 553 of his book.

missionaries ; and I do not doubt that this good servant of God is receiving much aid from them in the instructions which he will give to the Indians of his mission.

Our Gaspesians have so much veneration and respect for these characters that they scruple to throw them [146] into the fire. When these are torn or spoiled they bring the fragments to me. They are more religious, a hundred-fold, than the Iconoclasts who, through a sacrilegious impiety, broke the most sacred images. These people were even unable to view without scandal the madness of a young Indian woman who threw the characters into the fire, in vexation because I had excluded her from prayers on account of a considerable fault which she had committed.

Her insult being too unusual and too scandalous to be overlooked among a people who were already commencing to have much veneration for the instructions of Christianity, I believed that I was bound to testify, through certain forms suitable to the genius [147] of the Indians, the resentment I had conceived against her act, in order that my silence might not give occasion to some other to do as much.

I went then to her wigwam, where I found her father, together with certain other Indians, who were much surprised to see me enter with a countenance which expressed the grief that I had in my heart. They begged me several times to tell them the subject thereof, which I pretended to conceal from them by my silence. They were astonished to see me rummaging in the cinders of their fire with as much diligence as if I had lost something of the utmost importance, and taking two or three pinches thereof into my handkerchief, whilst sighing in the Indian fashion and saying *akahie*, [148] *akahié*.[1] In leaving the wigwam, I said to him that they were not to be surprised at my silence, since my heart wept

[1] This word, which our author writes *Akaia* on page 538 of his book, is obviously the same as the modern Micmac *Aagei'*, which Rand gives as meaning "Alas" (*English-Micmac Dictionary*, 11).

bitterly : that it shed tears of blood because his daughter had thrown into the fire the *oukate guenne Kignamatinoër* : that in truth I would appear little touched by the insult if this were only simple paper, but that I was inconsolable for the injury which she had done to the prayer of JESUS, who had been grievously offended by this scandalous action : and that, in fact, I would expose these ashes, which I believed to be those of my *oukate guenne*, at the door of the chapel, which his daughter should never enter more until she had washed them away with her tears, and until [149] with her grief she had blanched the handkerchief, which, by the blackness it had contracted, signalised evidently the enormity of an outrage which was capable of drawing the hatred and the anger of God upon the whole nation : and that, for my part, I had a mind to leave them, since I could not live if the prayer was not resuscitated which had been made to die in the fire.

These words, pronounced in the manner in which it is necessary to speak to the Indians on such an occasion, had all the effect that I expected therefrom, for they all appeared as dismayed as if they believed that I had already permanently closed the door of the chapel, which they called the Wigwam of JESUS, and that I was absolutely resolved [150] to refuse Baptism to the Indians whom I had previously prepared to receive worthily the first of our Sacraments. They assembled all together and came in a crowd to implore me, in the name of the God whom I had announced to them, not to abandon them, saying to me that my annoyance in truth was justified, but that I knew very well this girl had no sense, and that in fact they would so arrange everything that she would make entire reparation for the fault she had committed. And, in fact, they compelled this Indian girl to come and find me very early the next day in order to testify to me in public, in the presence of all the Indians, the keen regret which she had in her soul for [151] having burned her *Oukate guenne*, in which was the prayer of JESUS, and her wish, as she told me, to

make Him honourable amends and a reparation of honour, by a conduct entirely holy, and quite the opposite of the irregularities of her past life. She implored me, with all possible earnestness, to be willing to permit her to assist with the others at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, but I refused her this favour for some days in order thereby to make her better understand the scandal which she had brought upon all the nation.

From this you will see the esteem in which the Indians hold my *Oukate guenne Kignatimonoër*, which we call, as I have already stated, papers or instructive characters. They have no less [152] admiration for our books, and especially for our letters, of which they are the carriers when we write to our friends. They suppose that there is some enchantment or jugglery in them, or that this letter has a mind, because, say they, it has the virtue of telling to him who receives it everything which is said and everything which is done, even the most hidden and most secret.

Although our Indians exist in an ignorance so gross that, as we have said, they do not know either how to read or how to write, they have nevertheless some knowledge of the Great and the Little Bears, which they call, the first *Mouhinne*, and the second *Mouhinchiche*, which mean exactly in our language the [153] Great and the Little Bears.[1] They say that the

[1] These words are pure Micmac. Rand gives *Mooin* for "bear" (in his Dictionaries), while *chiche* is the inseparable suffix, very commonly used, meaning "little." Our author evidently believed that the Indians had independently named these constellations the Great and Little Bear, but one's first thought must be that this were too remarkable a coincidence, and the Indians must have obtained the names from early fishermen or other Europeans. It appears, however, that the same idea and name for this constellation is very widespread among the American Indians, for which reason, and others, a modern student of the subject, Mr. Stansbury Hagar, who has examined the subject comparatively, is of opinion that the name is strictly aboriginal, and he gives a natural explanation of its origin (*Journal of American Folk Lore*, XIII., 1900, 92). The three guards of the North Star are, of course, the stars $\beta$ and $\gamma$ of Ursa minor, still called the "Guards of the Pole," together with some smaller star of the same group.

three guards of the North Star is a canoe in which three Indians are embarked to overtake this bear, but that unfortunately they have not yet been able to catch it.

They have much ingenuity in drawing upon bark a kind of map which marks exactly all the rivers and streams of a country of which they wish to make a representation. They mark all the places thereon exactly and so well that they make use of them successfully, and an Indian who possesses one makes long voyages without going astray.

They know five kinds of winds ; that is to say, the North, the South, the North-east, the North-west, and the South-west.[1] They have [154] so exact an idea that, provided they have the sun in view, they never wander from their route ; and they know all the rivers so exactly that, however slightly a certain wigwam may be indicated to them, though it be distant eighty to a hundred leagues, they find it at the place named, even though it is necessary to traverse very dense forests. But when night overtakes them, or when clouds hide the sun, then they would be really embarrassed were it not for some natural signs which they find upon certain trees —some moss or branches which incline to the north side and which serve them as guides on their voyages in default of the sun.[2] But so soon as darkness comes on they are at their wits' end. [155] They reckon distances only by the points and capes which are found along the rivers or coasts. They count and measure them also by the length of time which they take in their voyages, and by the number of nights which they are obliged to sleep on the way, not counting either the day of their departure or that of their arrival.

[1] This sentence is evidently somewhat out of place, for the text before and after it belongs together.

[2] These signs are more or less well known in our day, and are used to some extent by hunters. The tips of some evergreen trees are said to incline as a rule somewhat towards the east, while mosses and some other low growths tend to seek the damper and shadier, and therefore the north, side of a tree trunk on which they are growing. The subject is well discussed in H. Kephart's *Book of Camping and Woodcraft* (New York, Outing Co., 1906, 20).

They know how to count only up to the number of ten. Consequently when they wish to say twenty, they say two times ten ; to say thirty, they say three times ten, and so on for the rest.

When they wish to express an extraordinary number they make use of the same expressions as our first [156] missionaries—pointing to the leaves of the trees, the grains of sand, and the hairs of their heads—a mode of expression of which God himself has made use, when, in promising to Abraham a numerous posterity, he declared that he would raise up children unto him in number as great as the stars in the firmament and as the grains of sand upon the shores of the sea. David, also, found no better comparison, in order to indicate the number of his sins, than that of his hairs. It was also this manner of speech which certain of our Gaspesians who have visited France, have used on their return in order to indicate to their fellow-countrymen the great number of people [157] whom they had seen.

They count the years by the winters, the months by the moons, the days by the nights, the hours of the morning in proportion as the sun advances into its meridian, and the hours of the afternoon according as it declines and approaches its setting. They give thirty days to all the moons, and regulate the year by certain natural observations which they make upon the course of the sun and the seasons. They say that the spring has come when the leaves begin to sprout, when the wild geese appear, when the fawns of moose attain to a certain size in the bellies of their mothers, and when the seals bear their young. They recognise that it is summer when the salmon [158] run up the rivers, and when the wild geese shed their plumage. They recognise that it is the season of autumn when the waterfowl return from the north to the south. As for the winter, they mark its approach by the time when the cold becomes intense, when the snows are abundant upon the ground, and when the bears retire into

the hollows of the trees, from which they do not come forth until the spring, according to an account which we shall give thereof later.[1]

Our Gaspesians, then, divide the year into four seasons, by four different periods. The Spring is called *Paniah*, the Summer *Nibk*, the Autumn *Taoüak*, and the Winter *Kesic*.[2] They count only five moons of Summer and five of Winter for the entire year, as was [159] customary in old times among the Romans, before Julius Cæsar, a year before his death, had divided it into twelve months. They confound one moon of the Spring with those of the Summer, and one of the Autumn with those of the Winter, since in fact it can truly be said, that there is little of Spring and of Autumn in Gaspesia, inasmuch as the passage is imperceptible there from cold to heat and from heat to cold, which is very rigorous. They have no regular weeks; if they make any such division it is by the first and the second quarter, the full and the wane of the moon. All their months have very expressive names. They begin the year with the Autumn, which they call *Tkours*;[3] this expresses [160] that the rivers begin to freeze, and is properly the month of November. *Bonodemeguiche*,[4]

[1] Yet he does not again mention the matter in his book. No doubt he intended to return to it in his chapter on the Hunting of the Gaspesians (Chapter XVIII.).

[2] All of these words are still in use among the Micmacs, as shown by Rand's *English-Micmac Dictionary*. Rand gives Spring ("Spring opens") as *Baneâk'* (page 249), implying that our author's word is misprinted from *Paniak*, Summer as *Nipk* (page 258), Autumn as *Togwaak* (page 27), implying that our author's word is misprinted from *Tagüak*, and Winter as *Kĕsik* (page 283).

[3] The modern Micmac equivalent for this word appears to be *Skools*, which Rand gives (*English-Micmac Dictionary*, 181) for November. This seems the same word with the usual substitution of *l* for *r*, and the *T* a misprint for *S*. Rand does not give its derivation, but the meaning assigned it by our author, which is no doubt correct, would connect it with *kĕlche*, "to freeze," while the prefixed *S* would stand for *seep*, "a river."

[4] This word is given by Rand in the form *Boonămooe-goos'*, with the same meaning, but applied to January (*First Reading Book in the Micmac Language*, 103). Since the Micmac name of the Tomcod, or Frost Fish, is *Poonămoo*

which is that of December, signifies that the Tomcod ascends into the rivers; they catch this fish with the line, making a hole in the ice. And it is the same way with the other months, each of which has its particular designation.

(Rand, *op. cit.*, 54), or, as our author writes it, *ponamon*, the word *Bonodemeguiche* is obviously misprinted—very likely for *Bonoaemeguiche*.

A list of the Micmac names of all of the months is given by Rand, in the work cited, page 103.

## CHAPTER VIII

### *On the Language of the Gaspesians*

THE Gaspesian language has nothing at all in common, in its expressions, any more than in the meaning of its words, with the languages of our Europe; and it seems as if the confusion of tongues, which God of old originated [161] in order to destroy and utterly overthrow that famous and daring enterprise by which men planned nothing less than to unite Heaven to Earth by the building of the tower of Babel, did extend even to the numerous nations of Indians of New France, because, amidst an infinity of different tongues which prevail among all these peoples, our Gaspesians are distinguished from the Montagniez, Soquoqui, Abennaqui, Hurons, Algomquins, Iroquois, and other nations of this new world, by a language which is peculiar to them.

In connection with its distinctive features we are able to say that the Gaspesian language is very [162] beautiful and very rich in its expressions.[1] For it is not so sterile as

[1] This statement of our author is amply confirmed from other sources. Thus l'Abbé Manach, who knew Micmac well, is quoted as saying in 1760 that he "found so much excellence in it, that he was well persuaded that if the beauties of it were known in Europe, there would be seminaries erected for the propagation of it" (Murdoch, *History of Nova Scotia*, II. 396). Dr. Silas Rand, in the Introduction to his *English-Micmac Dictionary*, emphasises "its copiousness, its regularity of declension and conjugation, its expressiveness, its simplicity of vocables, and its mellifluousness." Compare also Rale's very similar description of the closely allied Abnaki in the *Jesuit Relations* (Thwaites' edition, LXVII. 145). There is also much on the Micmac language in a work supposed to be by l'Abbé Maillard, *An Account of the Customs and Manners of the Micmacs, &c.*, London, 1758.

Many there are, of whom the editor of this volume is one, who must regret

the European languages, which have recourse to a frequent repetition of the same terms in order to express several different things. Each word of Gaspesian has its particular and specific significance; this shows remarkably well in their speeches, which are always very elegant.

This language has not a single bad accent. It is pronounced freely and very easily. It is not necessary to force it from the pit of the stomach, as are the languages of the Hurons, of the Swiss, or of the Germans. Our Indians agree with the Greeks and Latins in this, that they use always the singular, and almost never, [163] or at least very rarely, the plural, even when they speak to their missionaries, or to some other person of prominence. They express themselves by the word *kir*,[1] which means "thou," whether it is the child speaking to its father, the wife to her husband, or the husband to his wife.

They have much difficulty in pronouncing the letter *r*, which as a rule they sound like *l*; thus, instead of saying "mon pere," they say "mon pele."[2] The sound of *u* is changed into *ou*; thus in order to say "vertu," they will say "vertou."

that our author's chapter on the Gaspesian language is one of the shortest, instead of one of the longest, in the book.

The various later works we possess upon the Gaspesian, that is, the Micmac language, by Maillard, Rand, and a few others, are described in full in J. C. Pilling's admirable and exhaustive *Bibliography of the Algonquian Languages* (Washington, 1891). Of later students the most prominent is Rev. Father Pacifique, of the Micmac Mission of Sainte Anne de Restigouche, Quebec, who has published several small works in Micmac, and who edits a small monthly journal, *The Micmac Messenger*, printed chiefly in that tongue.

[1] In modern Micmac this word is *Keel*, "thou" (Rand, *English-Micmac Dictionary*, 264), exactly the same word, with the usual substitution of *r* for *l*. This use of the second person singular is well illustrated in various places in our author's book, especially in the Indian speeches beginning respectively at pages 76, 179, 232, 317, 336, 345, 350, 382, 397, and 538.

[2] The Micmacs still have this difficulty with our letter *r*, as I know from my own observation; and they still solve it in the same way. The French, knowing this peculiarity of theirs, usually represented their *l* sound by *r*, and an instance thereof occurs in the preceding paragraph.

The names that our Gaspesians give to one another, or that father and mother apply to their children, are all very full of significance. They imitate our first father Adam, who gave to all the [164] creatures names conformable to the qualities of their being. Those of our Indians express and indicate either the fine deeds, or the natural and predominant characteristics, of those who receive them, very much as among the Romans, whose names all had significance. Thus some were called Lucius, from having been born at the break of day; others were called Cæsar, because at the birth of the first of that name, the side of the mother was opened by an incision in order to give life to the child. Thus our Indians, if they are good hunters, are called *Smagnis* or *Koucdedaoui*,[1] which is equivalent to saying "Hawk," and so on for the others.

[1] An Indian of this name was our author's companion on his laborious voyage from Nepisiguit to Miramichi in 1677, as shown at page 247 of his book. The word is evidently identical with the modern Micmac *Kwĕdĕdowwe*, name of the pigeon hawk (Rand, *English-Micmac Dictionary*, 129). Comparison of the words makes it seem likely that our author's form is misprinted from *Kouededaoüi*, and this view receives support from the fact that it is actually thus printed on page 265, though in other cases (pages 247, 264) it is spelled with the *c* as on this page.

The other word *Smagnis* I cannot find in modern Micmac in Rand's works. It evidently means some kind of hawk, and the nearest approach thereto is *Wĭskŭmagwāāsoo-k*, "the fish hawk" (Rand, *First Reading Book in the Micmac Language*, 50). Turning now to the language of the Maliseets, many of whose words are very like those of the Micmacs, I find that the fish hawk is called *i'-sĕ-me-kwĕs'* (Chamberlain, *Maliseet Vocabulary*, 35), which would be identical with *smagnis* if the *n* of the latter were misprinted from *w*. Accordingly, I believe this word was the Gaspesian name for the fish hawk, and should read *smagwis;* it is apparently a form, dialectic or abbreviated, of the word above cited from Rand.

[165] CHAPTER IX

*On the Religion of the Gaspesians*

THE Gaspesians, if we except those who have received the faith of JESUS CHRIST with their baptism, have never really known any deity, since they have lived down to our own day without temples, priests, sacrifices, and any indication of religion. Thus, if one may judge of the past by the present, it is easy to infer that if they have worshipped any deity at all, they have shown him so little veneration and respect that they have been in reality indifferent and unfaithful in the matter of religion. This, however [166], is not true with regard to the sun, which they have worshipped, and which has always been the constant object of their devotion, homage and adoration. They have believed that this luminous planet, which, by its wonderful power and its marvellous effects, constitutes the adornment and all the beauty of nature, was also the first author thereof, and that therefore they were obliged, out of gratitude, to hold all the sentiments of respect of which they were capable for a planet which did them so much good by its presence, and whose absence, during the darkness of the night, brought mourning to all nature.

The worship which they offered to the sun was not like the sacrifice [167] of the Mexicans, who every year offered to their idols more than twenty thousand hearts of their little children ; nor was it like that of the Ethiopians, who blessed the sun on its rising, but who cursed it with a thousand imprecations upon its setting.

More religious a hundred times than those foolish and

cruel peoples, our Gaspesians used to come out regularly from their wigwams to salute the sun just when it began to dart its first morning rays, and they did the same also without fail at its setting; this latter time, in their opinion, was the most favourable in which these courtiers of the sun might hope to render it propitious to their vows, after having exhibited to it their necessities and their needs.

[168] They performed no other ceremony than that of turning the face towards the sun. They commenced straightway their worship by the ordinary greeting of the Gaspesians, which consists in saying three times, *Ho*, *ho*, *ho*, after which, while making profound obeisances with sundry movements of the hands above the head, they asked that it would grant their needs:[1] that it would guard their wives and their children: that it would give them the power to vanquish and overcome their enemies: that it would grant them a hunt rich in moose, beavers, martens, and otters, with a great catch of all kinds of fishes: finally they asked the preservation of their lives for a great number of years, [169] and a long line of posterity.

Such is the custom I have seen observed by a certain aged man of that nation, who, in dying, took with him, as it seemed to me, all that was left of superstition and false worship in a religion badly enough observed; for since him I have never seen nor heard of a Gaspesian who had performed that kind of ceremony.

Such is the general idea I have formed of the religion of our Gaspesians. But so far as particulars are concerned, I have found among certain Indians, whom we call Cross-

[1] Father Biard relates that a young juggler told him, "When they were in great need he put on his sacred robe (for the Autmoins have a precious robe, expressly for their Orgies) and turning toward the East said, *Niscaminou, hignemoüy ninem marcodam*, 'Our sun, or our God, give us something to eat'; that after that they went hunting cheerfully and with good luck" (*Jesuit Relations*, Thwaites' edition, III. 133).

bearers,[1] sufficient evidence to make us conjecture, and even to believe, that these people have not been wholly deaf to the voice of the apostles, of which the [170] sound has reverberated through all the earth; for among them, all pagans as they are, the Cross is held in singular veneration. They wear it pictured upon their clothes and upon their flesh: they hold it in their hands in all their voyages, whether by sea or by land: and finally they place it both outside and inside their wigwams, as a mark of honour which distinguishes them from the other nations of Canada.

These Indians live at the River of Mizamichi,[2] which we have since honoured by the august title of Sainte-Croix, naming it amid the roar of cannon and a thousand acclamations of joy and of rejoicing as well from the French as the Indians.

Since I consider that this [171] statement is one of the most important in my *Relation*, I have thought that, after the very exact investigation which I have made thereof during the dozen years that I have dwelt as a missionary among these peoples, I ought to satisfy the desire and request of sundry persons who have besought me to give this history to the world, and that I should make known to the public the origin of the worship of the Cross among these pagans, together with its interruption and its resumption.

[1] The word in the original is Porte-Croix, which occurs also on the title-page of our author's book. This subject of the origin of the worship of the Cross among the Indians of Miramichi is discussed fully in the Introduction to the present volume (pages 32–40).

[2] Now called Miramichi. This name Sainte-Croix was of course suggested by our author. It appeared upon a few maps, but did not persist. The name was no doubt given at the time when Father le Clercq was there with Father Jumeau, as told in his book a few pages later, viz. 189–193. He mentions the matter again on page 246.

[172] CHAPTER X

*On the Origin of the Worship of the Cross among those Gaspesians called Cross-bearers*

I DO not know what judgment you will pass upon the manner in which our Indians say they have received the Cross, according to the tradition of their ancestors. They claim that, at a time when their country was afflicted with a very dangerous and deadly malady which had reduced them to an extreme destitution in every respect and had already sent many of them to their graves, certain old men of those whom they considered the best, the wisest, and the most influential, fell asleep, all overwhelmed [173] with weariness and despair at seeing a desolation so general and the impending ruin of the entire Gaspesian nation, unless it should promptly be rescued through the powerful aid of the sun, which they recognised, as we have already said, as their deity. It was, say they, in this sleep filled with bitterness that a man, beautiful as could be, appeared to them with a Cross in his hand. He told them to take heart, to go back to their homes, to make Crosses like that which were shown them, and to present these to the heads of families with the assurance that if they would receive the Crosses with respect they would find these without question the remedy for all their ills. [174] As the Indians believe in dreams, even to the extent of superstition, they did not neglect this one in their extreme need; consequently these good old men returned to the wigwams whence they had set out the previous day, and summoned a general assembly of all

that remained of a dying nation, when all together resolved, by common consent, that all would receive with honour the sacred sign of the Cross, which was presented to them from heaven for making an end of their misery and a beginning of their happiness. And so it turned out in fact, for the sickness ended, and all the afflicted who used the Cross with respect were restored miraculously to health. In this they were more happy, a thousand- [175] fold, than the people of Bizance, whose city was almost wholly depopulated of its residents by the plague which had infected all Sicily and Calabria in the year seven hundred and forty-eight. History teaches us that certain blue and shining Crosses were to be seen on some people's garments, and that all those who were thus marked died suddenly of the plague, to the great amazement of everybody. The Cross was not so fatal nor of so ill augury to our poor Gaspesians. It was much rather, in their country, like the rainbow, which God in old time displayed across the face of all the universe in order to comfort the human race with [176] the promise that He would not again inflict punishment by a second deluge. It was thus that the Cross stopped all at once this torrent of sickness and death which was desolating these people, and became to them a potent sign filled with a marvellous fertility of favours and benedictions. The miraculous advantages which they had received from it made them hope for others much more important in the future. This is why they all resolved not to settle any matter, nor to undertake any voyage, without the Cross.

Accordingly, after the resolution taken in their council that they would always wear the Cross, without even excepting the little children, not an Indian would ever dare to appear [177] before the others without having in his hand, on his skin, or on his garments this sacred sign of their salvation. And it came to pass that, if it became a question of deciding something of consequence concerning the nation,

whether with regard to concluding peace or to declaring war against the enemies of the fatherland, the chief would call together all the elders, who came promptly to the council-place. When they were all assembled there, they would raise a Cross nine or ten feet high and would form a circle and take their places, each with his Cross in his hand, leaving that of the council in the midst of the assembly. Then the chief, beginning to speak, would introduce the subject for which he had summoned them to the council, and all [178] these Cross-bearers would express their opinions in order that suitable measures might be taken and a final decision reached upon the affair which was under consideration. Thus, if it was a question of sending a deputy to their neighbours, or to some other foreign nation, the chief would name, and would cause to enter the circle, that one of the young men whom he considered most suitable for the execution of their project ; and after he had publicly told the young man the choice that had been made of his person for the matter that was communicated to him, the chief would draw from his bosom an especially fine Cross which he kept wrapped in the most precious material that he had at command. Showing it with reverence to all the assembly, he would make, by means of a [179] prepared speech, a recital of the favours and blessings which the whole Gaspesian nation had derived from the assistance of the Cross. He would then order the deputy to approach and receive it with reverence, and, hanging it from his neck, would say to him : " Go ; take care of this Cross, which will preserve thee from all dangers among those to whom we send thee." The elders, by their usual expressions of *hoo*, *hoo*, *hoo*, expressed approval of that which the chief had said, wishing all kinds of success to this deputy in the voyage he was about to undertake for the good of his nation.

This ambassador, accordingly, would depart from the

council with the Cross at his neck as the honourable symbol [180] and the mark of his ambassadorship. He would lay it aside only in the evening, and then in order to place it upon his head, in the thought that it would chase away all evil spirits during his repose. He guarded it always with care until the completion of his negotiation, after which he returned it into the hands of the chief with the same ceremonies with which he had received it in full council, where, before the whole assembly, he would make a report of the result of his voyage.

In a word, they undertook nothing without the Cross. The chief himself carried it in his hand, as one carries a stick when he is walking upon snowshoes, and he stood it in the most honoured spot in his wigwam.[1] If they embarked upon the water [181] in their little bark canoes, they placed a Cross at each end thereof, believing sincerely that it would preserve them from shipwreck.

Such were the feelings of esteem and veneration which our Gaspesians of old had for the Cross, and these feelings survive piously in the hearts of our Cross-bearers right down to our own day, since there is not a single one of them who does not wear it upon his clothes or upon his skin. The swaddling-clothes and the cradles of their infants are always adorned with it, while the barks of their wigwams, their canoes, and their snowshoes are all marked with it. The pregnant women work it in porcupine quills upon that part of their garment which is over the womb, in order [182] to place their offspring under the protection of the Cross. In fact, there is scarcely one of them who does not preserve very carefully in his privacy a little Cross made with wampum and beadwork, which he keeps and esteems much as we do the relics of the Saints, and even to such a degree that these

[1] Our author relates, on page 328 of his book, that he actually found the Cross in this position of honour in the first wigwam of the Cross-bearers that he visited.

people prefer it to all the richest and most precious things which they possess.

An Indian woman, named Marie Joseph, whom Reverend Father Claude Moreau, the earliest[1] of our missionaries, had baptized, affords a convincing proof thereof. Falsely alarmed, in common with the other Indians with whom she was encamped, and believing that the Iroquois had invaded the [183] country in order to ravage for a third time the Gaspesian nation,[2] she embarked with very much haste in her birch canoe, in order to cross the river, and, having abandoned it to the will of the current, she lost herself purposely in the woods in order to escape the fury of her enemies. The hunger and need felt by this poor woman became so great that she considered herself fortunate to find in these wastes some roots which served her for nourishment during the ten or twelve days of her wanderings. Overwhelmed with misfortune in this vast solitude, she had no other consolation than her Cross. She never parted with it, even when she was obliged to repass the river [184] by swimming, in order to reach the wigwams of the Indians, who believed she was dead. She preferred to forsake and leave the little she possessed rather than to abandon her Cross, which she held between her teeth.

[1] That is, one of the earliest to come to Canada after the long exclusion of the Recollects. Compare the note under page 145 of our author's book (page 132 of the present volume).

[2] Although there are many traditions as to the incursions of the Mohawks (Iroquois) into the country of the Micmacs, there is not, so far as I can find, any actual historical record thereof. Several of these Micmac traditions are given by Rand in his *Legends of the Micmacs*, (169, 200 and elsewhere). It is sometimes stated that the Restigouche (*e.g.* by Rand, *op. cit.*, 200) or according to others, the Nepisiguit (*e.g.* by Cooney, in his *History of Northern New Brunswick*, 170) was at one time the boundary between Mohawks and Micmacs; and if Hale's theory turns out to be true, that the tribe which Cartier found at Gaspé were not Micmacs but Huron-Iroquois, then there may be some historical basis for this statement. There is a legend that the l'Isle au Massacre near Bic took its name from a massacre there of Micmacs by Iroquois. The fear which the Micmacs had of the Mohawks is mentioned several times in the *Jesuit Relations* (Thwaites' edition, XXVIII. 37, XLV. 73), and even persists to this day.

She returned thus to the wigwams, saying that there was nothing more precious than the Cross, since it had preserved her from an infinity of dangers, had procured her all kinds of consolations in her misfortunes, and that, in a word, life would appear to her altogether without interest if she had to live without the Cross.

The burial-places of these people are readily recognised by the Crosses which they place over their tombs[1]; and their cemeteries, distinguished by this sign of salvation, appear more like those of [185] Christians than of Indians. This ceremony they observe as often as any one of the nation of the Cross-bearers dies, even if this happens at a distance of a hundred leagues from the place where their burial is usually made.

The most important places for fishing and hunting are marked by the crosses which they set up in the vicinity, and one is agreeably surprised, in voyaging through their country, to find from time to time upon the borders of the rivers, crosses with double and triple cross-pieces, like those of the Patriarchs. In a word, they value the Cross so highly that they order it to be interred with them in their coffins after death, in the belief that this Cross [186] will bear them company in the other world, and that they would not be recognised by their ancestors if they had not with them the symbol and honourable token which distinguishes the Cross-bearers from all the other Indians of New France.[2]

Since this Gaspesian nation of the Cross-bearers has been almost wholly destroyed, as much by the war which they have waged with the Iroquois as by the maladies which have infected this land, and which, in three or four visitations, have caused the deaths of a very great number, these Indians have

[1] This is reflected very clearly in Father Jumeau's map, reproduced at page 11 of this volume. The many crosses on that map indicate, without doubt, the burial-places noticed by him in his wanderings with the Indians.

[2] Additional and very important material upon this subject is given by our author in the next chapter, beginning at page 270.

gradually relapsed from this first devotion of their ancestors. So true is it, that even the holiest and most religious practices, by a certain fatality attending human affairs, [187] suffer always much alteration if they are not animated and conserved by the same spirit which gave them birth. In brief, when I went into their country to commence my mission, I found some persons who had preserved only the shadow of the customs of their ancestors. They lacked respect for the Cross, and they had abolished the habit of meeting in Cross-Assemblies, those in which, with the Cross in the centre of the circle and of the Council as we have related, they decided, as a court of last resort, the affairs of the nation. Nevertheless, we have laboured successfully to cause to be re-born in the hearts and minds of these Indians the love and esteem which they ought to preserve inviolably [188] for this sacred sign of their salvation. And Heaven has poured in abundance the plenitude of its blessings upon the zeal of Reverend Father Emanuel Jumeau,[1] our dear missionary colleague, who

[1] Concerning Father Jumeau we know little more than our author tells us in this book. The date of his birth was unknown to Tanguay, who, however, places his death in December 1707 (*Répertoire du Clergé Canadien*). Tanguay states that Father Jumeau came to Canada in 1685, but he must have been there much earlier, as two pieces of evidence attest. First, Father Jumeau's map, reproduced in this volume (page 11), is dated October 4, 1685, and there is no reason to question the correctness of this date. Now, although this map, with its wealth of new and accurate data which here appear for the first time, must for the most part have been simply compiled or copied by Father Jumeau from sources whose origin is still uncertain, it contains nevertheless material, especially as to the cross-bearer Indians, obviously added from his own observations, and such as implies a considerable previous knowledge of the country. The sources of Barnaby River (R. Chicudi), for example, are given with an accuracy which can hardly be derived from any source except personal observation during winter wanderings with the Indians; besides, there is the positive statement in the title of the map itself (given in the note on page 11 of this volume). Second, as is well known and attested by documents (given in translation in the *Collections of the New Brunswick Historical Society*, III. 21), in 1685 a grant for a mission at Miramichi was made by Richard Denys to the Seminary of Quebec, and, as Monseigneur de Saint Valier shows in his *Estat present de l'Eglise*, 30, 46, Father Thury spent there the winter of 1685–86, if not the one preceding. Now it is very plain from various evidence that the

has had the consolation of seeing our Gaspesians more devoted than ever to the worship of the Cross, after having occupied himself there devotedly with all the assiduity and the talent which God has given him for the conversion of these poor pagans. This good religious, whom I had previously inducted into the novitiate of our monastery of Arras, on the very day on which I had set out for Canada, had written me several times in order to testify to me the zeal which God had given

mission which Fathers le Clercq and Jumeau made there together, as described in these pages, was earlier than that. Thus the contemporary Father le Tac, in his *Histoire Chronologique*, says that Fathers le Clercq and Jumeau were there "up to the time when M. Denys granted nine leagues of his lands to Messieurs of the Seminary of Quebec, who sent there M. Thury to continue the mission of the Recollects" (translation from page 39). Again, Richard Denys, in a recently published memoir of 1688 (*Collections* above cited, 36), says that he had maintained Recollects for nine years, but they had been removed by the Bishops of Quebec, and that another priest who had been there for two years had also been removed, as we know (from Monseigneur de Saint Valier's *Estat present de l'Eglise*, 108) Father Thury was in 1687. Father Jumeau therefore served on the Miramichi prior to 1685, and presumably for some years. It is plain that he was not with Father le Clercq before the voyage to France in 1680–81, nor was he with Father le Clercq on his return voyage in 1681. Therefore we may place the date of his arrival as probably in 1682. He may have revisited France, returning at the date mentioned by Tanguay. When removed from the Miramichi he evidently was assigned to l'Isle Dieu (Tanguay, *op. cit.*), and I am told by Fathers Hugolin and Odoric that in 1689–90 he was missionary at Rivière Ouelle and Saint-Anne-de-la-Grande-Anse, parishes below Quebec. His shipwreck in the autumn of 1689, and his presence at Isle Percée during the destruction of the settlement, are set forth by himself in his letter given earlier in our author's book (6).

To these scanty facts I may add certain others, trifling but not without interest. His name for a time was attached to the main entrance to Miramichi Bay, for it appears as *Passage Jumeau* on his own map, and persisted at least until Bellin's map of 1744, while upon Sayer's English map of 1755 it is translated as "Camel Passage"! A few years ago his name was applied to a prominent unnamed hill at the source of the Nepisiguit River, though it is yet too early to know whether it will come into use (*Bulletin of the Natural History Society of New Brunswick*, IV., 1899, 252). There is a facsimile of his autograph in l'Abbé Casgrain's *Une Paroisse Canadienne au xvii^e^ Siècle*, page 87. It is also worth noting that Father Thury's enthusiastic account of the good training of the Micmacs of Miramichi, as written to Monseigneur de Saint Valier (*Estat present de l'Eglise*, 46–50), is a great compliment to Fathers le Clercq and Jumeau, who had trained them.

him for the salvation of souls, and that the greatest of all [189] consolations to him, as he told me, would be to die nobly in the midst of the woods and forests of Canada in preaching the gospel of JESUS CHRIST to the Indians. He revealed the desire which he had therefor to the Reverend Father Provincial, and after having obtained from him the approbation, which he asked with much fervour, he embarked at La Rochelle for Canada, and thus came to assist me in the toilsome and laborious work of the mission which I was making to our Cross-bearers. He learned the language in a short time, thanks to a dictionary thereof which I had composed, so that he was very soon in condition to instruct these pagans.

However much inclination I had to remain longer[1] [190] with this amiable missionary, I was nevertheless obliged to deprive myself of this consolation, for I judged that it was more desirable for the glory of God that we separate. This was in order that I might render myself useful to sundry other Indians, who had supplicated me, through their ambassadors, to go among them to announce the gospel of JESUS CHRIST.

We therefore settled, by mutual consent, upon the day of our separation. The Cross-bearers, who had heard the news thereof, assembled at the chapel to take part in the prayers which we must make before our departure. They strove in emulation with one another to give me sincere evidences of their friendship, testifying to me their keen regret because I was leaving them. [191] Our Indians never left me, and whatever regret they had in their hearts, they concealed it nevertheless as well as they could, whether in order not to augment the distress that I myself felt in leaving them, or

[1] There is evidently a break in the narrative here, and something has been omitted, perhaps with the design of shortening the book. Our author is describing one of his visits to Miramichi, but there are no data, so far as I can discover, for fixing the date. It must, however, for reasons given in the preceding note, have been later than 1681 and earlier than 1685.

because I promised that I should see them again as soon as I had completed the mission which I was just undertaking for the conversion of their brothers.

Before we separated I made to them a prepared address, in which, after describing the trouble I had taken to instruct them in the maxims of Christianity, I testified to them that I did not wish any more agreeable acknowledgment thereof than the good use which they [192] would make of my instructions. I made them understand once more the benefit I had procured them in giving them a missionary as zealous for their salvation as Father Emanuel, and the strict obligation which they in particular were under to embrace and to preserve Christianity with more piety than the other Indians of this new world, because of that miraculous favour which they had received from heaven in preference to so many other nations, as the sign and the sacred pledge of their salvation. Finally, after having exhorted them with all my heart, by the merit of the Cross which I held in my hand, and which I embraced often with reverence, to be always faithful to God, and to have for their missionary [193] the same consideration, respect, and friendship which they had held for myself, I implored Father Emanuel Jumeau, by all the most tender and touching things I could say to him, to persevere steadfastly in instructing them in the truths of our holy religion. It was necessary, at length, that we separate, after having implored the aid of heaven for the happy success of our missions. Accordingly I took leave of our French, and, accompanied by three Indians, I set out and slept at Mirmenaganne,[1] four leagues from the Fort of Monsieur Richard de Fronsac.

[1] This is the Micmac name of the Northwest Miramichi. It is still in use by these Indians in the form *Mˀelmenakun*, which is evidently the same word with the usual substitution of *r* for *l*. In a deed of sale of land in this region made by Richard Denys in 1686 (printed in translation in the *Collections of the New Brunswick Historical Society*, III., 1907, 25) it is spelled *Muminagan*, while the De Meulles' map of the same year has *Mimnagan*, which later

I heard with joy, fifteen days after my departure, through one of our Cross-bearers, that this dear missionary, having assembled as many of the Indians [194] as he could, had obliged them to make honourable amends to the Cross by rendering to it, through these people, a part of the honour of which the negligence of their ancestors had robbed it.

The ceremony began at evening, at sunset, in the following manner. The father had a Cross erected like that which the forefathers of the Gaspesian nation were accustomed to plant in the midst of the place set aside for the holding of their council. He prostrated himself devoutly, with all the Indians, before this sacred sign of our salvation, and he intoned, in the Indian language, at the conclusion of the usual prayers, the *Vexilla regis*, which our Cross-bearers chanted alternately, [195] the men and the women, with a singular piety. After these exercises of devotion, everybody retired into the wigwam of the chief, where they could speak of nothing but the wonders of the Cross. I can even assert with truth that they were like the people of Israel who had lived long in the neglect and contempt of the commandments of the law, and who could not restrain their tears when the High Priest Helchias gave them a faithful recital of the blessings they had received from God, and of the just reproach of ingratitude in which they had lived so long without recognising His perfection and His greatness.

became corrupted to *Minaqua* on French maps. It is without doubt the *Manne* of Monseigneur de Saint Valier's description, reproduced on a later page (page 180). The name was applied to the entire Northwest Miramichi from Beaubears Island up to Portage River and beyond. Four leagues up its course from the Fort of Richard Denys de Fronsac would take one about to the abrupt turn which it makes to the north, and just in the angle an important old Indian camp ground is known. Here, accordingly, it is probable our author slept on the night he left the Fort. He was evidently on his way back to Nepisiguit by the usual portage route, which ran up this river and *via* Portage River and Gordon Brook (compare the map on page 175, and the note on page 166). In another place in his book (page 480) he refers to the beaver dams he met on this route.

Likewise did all of our Cross-bearers melt into tears when the missionary father explained to them [196] the advantages and the blessings they had received from the Cross, the esteem and veneration with which it had been honoured by their ancestors, and the little care which they had themselves so far taken to render it the worship which was legitimately its due. They all protested publicly, before they went to rest, that they were keenly touched with grief, and that the same sun which had been the witness of their ingratitude would be the witness also of the respect and the adoration which they would render publicly to the Cross. The night passed with these sentiments of devotion, and the next day, at daybreak, the father had his altar erected in a special wigwam, which the Indians [197] had arranged very suitably with branches of fir, and there he celebrated the Holy Mass, after which, all clothed as he was in his priestly robes, he distributed Crosses to all the Gaspesians present, even to the children. These Indians, by a holy emulation, which indicated visibly the approbation they gave to the zeal of their missionary, each and all prepared several fine Crosses, which they ornamented with beadwork, wampum, and their usual painting; and they attached them at the two ends of their canoes in which they embarked, chanting devoutly the *Vexilla regis*.

I leave the reader to judge of the elegance of this Gaspesian flotilla [198] which, by a pleasing variety of standards ornamented by these Crosses in different colours, exhibited in the movement of the water and the reflection of the sun a spectacle of the most ravishing description, which gave much pleasure to the French when they saw the Indians arriving with their missionary, all carrying in their hands this holy sign of their salvation.[1]

[1] The coming of the Indians by water to the settlement of the French shows that mission and settlement were some distance apart, and perhaps across the river from one another. It fits, therefore, perfectly with the testimony

It was in the year 1677, and the second after my arrival in Canada, that I began for the first time the mission of the Cross-bearers, under circumstances which you are going to learn in the relation of the arduous voyage which I made through the burnt woods, in order to preach to them the Gospel. This was in accord with the promise I had made to that effect to a [199] delegation which the chief of that nation had sent from the river of Sainte Croix to Nipisiquit, where I was, in order to petition me to go and instruct them.

of Father Jumeau's map of 1685, which marks a *R. de Mission* on the south side of the Miramichi (near the modern site of Nelson, as shown on the maps at pages 11 and 179 of this volume), whereas it seems certain that the French settlement was on the north side, as shown by the same map. Still better on this point, and practically conclusive, is the testimony of a narrative of Father Thury, in the year 1685 or early 1686, as given in Bishop Saint Valier's *Estat present de l'Eglise* of 1688, which reads thus in translation. "I had gone to the house of M. de Tronsac [*i.e.* Fronsac] over the ice to visit two sick persons. On my return, having found my route impracticable on account of a thaw which had intervened, it was necessary for me to make a great circuit, which did not allow me to arrive before dark near the wigwam to which I was returning. As it was necessary to cross the river, and as I had neither canoe nor means to float in the obscurity which prevailed, I bethought myself to call from the place where I was. My voice was recognised in the wigwam. Two children of the chief, without concerning themselves as to the danger, crossed to me upon the ice, and after having sounded the running water which was between us, one of them took to swimming in order to aid me, whilst I slid along a little tree which we had laid across, of which one end rested upon the ground and the other upon the ice. As soon as I had placed my feet on the earth, he and his brother took me under the armpits and, rather carried than led me to the other side between them, with a charity and a cheerfulness which I cannot express." Father Thury's narrative shows in other passages that he was residing where he made his mission. Taking all the evidence together, it seems reasonably certain that the old Miramichi mission at which Father le Clercq, Father Jumeau, and Father Thury all laboured, was on the south side of the Miramichi, near the modern village of Nelson.

## CHAPTER XI

*Account of the arduous Voyage of the Author on his way to announce the Faith to the Cross-bearer Gaspesians*

IT is very true that it is only God alone who is able to alleviate, by the unction of His grace, the apostolic labours of the arduous missions of New France; therefore, it must be frankly admitted, that all the forces of Nature would only serve to increase the difficulties of the missionaries, if the Cross of a [200] crucified God did not impart to them a part of that victorious power by which He triumphed gloriously over all which He suffered most harsh and most sorrowful in the shame of Calvary. It was also without doubt in this thought that the Apostle Saint Paul said that he could endure everything by the grace of Him who gave the power to attempt all things, and to accomplish all, for His glory and the salvation of souls.

I have never had an experience more illustrative of this truth than in the voyage which I undertook in order to go to administer the sacraments to the French who lived with Monsieur Richard Denys de Fronsac[1] at Mizamichis, and to

[1] Richard Denys, Sieur de Fronsac, looms large in the early history of this part of Canada. He was the son of Nicolas Denys, the long-time Governor and Proprietor of all the Coasts of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence from Gaspé to Canso, and author of the well-known *Description geographique et historique . . . et Histoire Naturelle . . . de l'Amerique septentrionale.* A full biography of Richard Denys, based upon some nineteen documents, is contained in the *Collections of the New Brunswick Historical Society*, III., 1907, 7–54, while a briefer account of him, especially in relation to his father's work, is in the translation of Nicolas Denys' book published in 1908 by the Champlain Society, pages 21–22. He was probably born at Saint Peters, Cape Breton, about 1655. On his father's departure from Acadia to France in 1671 he was

preach the gospel to the Cross-bearer Indians [201] who had hardly ever heard anything at all concerning the mysteries of our holy religion. The charity which I ought to feel towards all the Indians of my mission urged me strongly to undertake the voyage, although it was in the winter, the most difficult and rigorous season ; and it seemed as if God had approved the plan when an Indian,[1] even when we expected it the least, arrived with his wife at Nipisiquit, and told me that in order to avoid certain discords which had arisen among the Gaspesians of Ristigouche, he had left that place with his wife and child to go to Mizamichis, in order to live there in peace with his acquaintances. Since this was [202] for me a sufficiently favourable opportunity, with a companionship which could be of very great aid in this journey, I requested him to put off his departure for a few days in order to allow me time and the satisfaction of baptizing some Indians, whom I had instructed to receive the first and most necessary of our sacraments. Our Indian waited for me gladly. Monsieur Hainaut de Barbaucannes[2] wished also to join the party,

made Lieutenant in his stead, and served in that capacity until his father's death in 1688, after which he held the post upon his own account. He inherited the Seigniory of Miramichi from his father, and, about 1690, he bought from its grantee the great Seigniory of Nepisiguit, so that, as Father le Clercq states on page 205 of his book, he was in 1691 the Seignior-Proprietor thereof. He strove to promote the settlement of this region, and with some success. His principal establishment was at Miramichi at the Forks of that river, on a site which will be further discussed in a later note of this volume (page 178). But all of his activities were brought to a close with his death by shipwreck in 1691 at the age of about thirty-six.

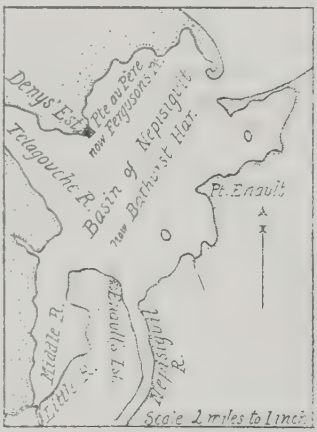
[1] This Indian's name was Koucdedaoüi, as our author tells us, with other facts about him, on page 247 of his book.

[2] This man, whose name is also spelled Enaud, Esnaud, Enault, and Esnault in various documents and local historical works, and whose full name was Philippe Enault, Sieur de Barbaucannes, was, next after the Denys, father and son, the most prominent early resident of this part of Canada. The information we possess about him is given in a biographical note in the *Collections of the New Brunswick Historical Society*, III., 1907, 34. He was a physician, a native of Saumur, where he was born in 1651. He came out to Nepisiguit, apparently in the employ of Richard Denys, about 1676. He settled at the mouth of the river Nepisiguit, on the site of the present town of Bathurst,

and offered in the most obliging manner to keep me company. We prepared for this purpose our provisions, which consisted of twenty-four small loaves of bread, five to six pounds of flour, three pounds of butter, and a little bark keg which held [203] two to three half gallons of brandy; besides, I took as a precaution a box of hyacinth confection, which the Hospitalier nuns had given me before my departure from Quebec for Nipisiquit.

Nipisiquit[1] is one of the most charming places in all the great Bay of Saint Lawrence. It is distant only a dozen to fifteen leagues from Isle Percée. The land there is fertile and abounds in everything; the air is pure and healthy. Three beautiful rivers which empty there form a very attractive basin, whose waters lose themselves in the sea through a strait which makes and marks the entrance thereto. The Recollects of the Province of Aquitaine commenced there a

where he had a grant of a league and a half square from Richard Denys, afterwards enlarged and confirmed by the Governor and Intendant at Quebec. He married an Indian woman and had several children, who, on his death, some time after 1690, appear to have scattered among the Indians. Thus both his family and his property rights lapsed and became extinct, though his name still lingers as that of a point in Nepisiguit Harbour. It is pleasing to find his character standing out so strongly and favourably in the pages which follow.




[1] Now commonly written Nepisiguit. It was the name applied by the French to the fine basin which we now call Bathurst Harbour. It is a corrupted Micmac Indian name, from *Winpekijawik*, meaning "rough water," their very appropriate name for the river, thence extended by the French to the Basin. It appears first in the *Jesuit Relation* of 1643 as *Nepegigouit*. Our author's description is accurate and none too laudatory. The place was also described appreciatively by Denys, who had an establishment there on Pointe au Père (*Description*, I. 208, and the Champlain Society's edition, page 213); and many a voyager and visitor since then has been charmed by its quiet and restful scenery.

mission [204] in 1620, and Father Bernardin,[1] one of those illustrious missionaries, died of hunger and fatigue in traversing the woods on the way from Miscou and Nipisiquit to the River Saint John in Acadia, where these Reverend Fathers had their principal establishment. The Reverend Capuchin

[1] A somewhat fuller account of the death of this missionary, with some difference of name and date, is given by our author in his other book, which reads thus: "The Reverend Father Sebastian had laboured there for three years when, in 1623, we learned at Quebec by two Indians the news of his death. This good religious had started from Miscou for St. John's River, where the chief mission of the Recollects of his province had been established. He was overcome by misery and fatigue while traversing the woods and the great extent of country between Miscou and Port Royal, so that he perished of hunger after having holily exercised the apostolic ministry in the conversion of infidels. As he had visited our Fathers at Quebec and wintered there, our religious considered him in esteem and affection, as a member of our mission, and offered the usual suffrages for him at the Convent of our Lady of the Angels" (*First Establishment of the Faith*, Shea's translation, I. 200). An entirely independent account is given by Father le Tac, in his *Histoire Chronologique* (page 119), which, translated, states that in the winter of 1623 "Father Bernardin, Recollect of the Province of Aquitaine, left Miscou in Acadia with the Indians who were going hunting, in order that he might instruct them; the snows being found too deep and too soft, they could do no hunting, with the result that the Father and the majority of those who were conducting him, having nothing to eat, died of hunger. For three years this religious had made his mission among the Indians of Acadia, whose language he had well mastered, and whom he instructed with joy, as he had written the year previously to the Reverend Recollect Fathers at Quebec in complaining of certain Basques who came to trade without leave on the coast of Acadia, and who gave bad impressions of the French to the Indians of those coasts."

Unless the name is very badly misprinted in the *First Establishment of the Faith*, this missionary's name was Father Sebastian Bernardin. Considering how largely both Father le Tac and Father le Clercq drew from Father Sagard's *Histoire du Canada* of 1636, one would expect to find some mention of Father Bernardin in that work. But I have not been able to find any such reference. It is a satisfaction to me, one not of his faith but an admirer of his spirit, thus to set forth all that we know of this devoted missionary as in some measure a tribute to his memory. But happily he has also a more striking monument, for his name, Bernardin, has been given to a prominent mountain at the source of the river Nepisiguit, near where he probably perished, and the name is coming into common use among the guides and others who visit that region (*Bulletin of the Natural History Society of New Brunswick*, IV., 1899, 250). Nothing is known, however, of the site of the establishment he was attempting to reach on the River Saint John.

Fathers, and especially the Reverend Jesuit Fathers, have there employed their zeal and their charity for the conversion of the pagans. They have had a chapel built, dedicated to the Holy Virgin, and it is observed that one of the fathers, who had gone from that mission, left his hat upon the altar, saying that he would return to seek it when it pleased him ; this he did to make known that his order had the right of establishment [205] in this place.[1] The Sieur Henaut de Barbaucannes cultivates the soil there with success, and harvests wheat more than sufficient for the support of his family. Monsieur Richard Denys de Fronsac is Seigneur-Proprietor of the place.

It is well to know that it is needful to carry the necessaries of life when one departs in Canada from the French settlements, and when one undertakes any considerable voyage, since there are neither public-houses nor inns ; and since, in these vast forests, houses are never found in which to pass the night, one is obliged to sleep in the open air. Convinced as we were of this truth by our previous experience, [206] each one took his wrap, and shouldered his pack in which was a part of the provisions which we needed for the journey we had to make.

All of our Gaspesians assisted devoutly at the prayers which we offered in the early morning to invoke the aid of the Guardian Angels of this country, and to ask of God the conversion of the Cross-bearer Indians to whom I was going, for the first time, to proclaim the truths of our holy religion. They did everything they could to induce me to spend the remainder of the winter with them, and to put off my

[1] Nothing further is known of the mission of the Capuchin Fathers, but the Jesuits have given some account of their labours in their *Relations*. The sites of the various chapels (or of the chapel, if they were all one), are not known, though tradition, place nomenclature, and perhaps geographical probabilities, combine in pointing to Pointe au Père, now Ferguson's Point, on the west side of the harbour. The evidence is discussed in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, V., 1899, ii. 299.

departure to a more suitable and less rigorous season. But, in short, it was only right [207] to gratify the French and the Indians of Mizamichis. The word of God is the spiritual food of souls ; it was essential, after four months of sojourn at Nipisiquit,[1] to distribute it to those who had so long awaited me in order to receive it. I made our Indians understand, therefore, that if they had so great a desire for the salvation of their brethren as they had testified to me, they ought to rejoice at the trouble I was going to take in order to give to those the same instructions which they themselves had received from my catechising, since I had no other purpose than to lead them, and to meet them all together, in heaven. These poor folk signified their approbation of my arguments and of my zeal by the expressions of approval usual [208] to that nation, and consented in the end to my departure under the promise that I gave to return among them at the opening of Spring.

The wife of our Indian undertook the care of her little infant, whom I, before my departure from Nipisiquit, baptized and named Pierre, through a special design of Providence and the mercy of God, as will easily be understood at the end of the narrative of this arduous voyage.[2]

We took each one his pack upon his shoulders, and set out upon our way, with snowshoes on our feet.[3] After four to five leagues of advance, the approach of evening obliged

[1] As the date of our author's departure from Nepisiguit (as the note under page 184 of this volume will show), was on or about January 26, this mention of the length of his stay at Nepisiguit fixes the date of his arrival at that place as on or about September 26 (1676).

[2] The allusion is explained on page 252 of his book.

[3] The day of their departure was January 26 (1677), or thereabouts, as shown by data given by our author on page 257 of his book (compare note on page 184 of this volume).

The great local interest of this narrative of our author's voyage has attracted the notice of New Brunswick students, and two annotated translations have been published—the first by Edward Jack (in condensed form), in a local newspaper, reprinted in *Acadiensis*, II. 107, and the second by myself in Hay's *Canadian History Readings* (St. John, 1900), 271.

us to make a camp in which to pass the night. It was necessary, [209] in order to make this camp as comfortable as the country would permit, to dig a hollow four or five feet deep in the snow, which we had to throw out with our snow-shoes until we reached the ground; and this our Indian woman covered with branches of fir, all fresh and green, on which we lay during the night.[1] Monsieur Henaut took the trouble, along with our Indian, to cut and collect the wood necessary to warm us; and each one partook of his repast with as much content as if we had been in a good inn. The loss of our brandy which we suffered was the only thing to give us vexation; for, despite the [210] precaution we had taken to gum up well the little keg of bark, some small opening had been left through which the brandy had run out along the road without our knowing anything about it until we wished to take some after the meal. Only a very little remained, and that was divided immediately in order to console us for this discomfiture, and to put what was left beyond the reach of loss. It is a fact, nevertheless, that we were deprived of a great solace by the loss of this brandy; for we found ourselves some time afterwards under conditions so trying that this liquor would have been without doubt of very great aid to us. But [211] we had to console ourselves for this vexatious adventure; and we passed the first night, like all the others of our voyage, at the Sign of the Moon and of the Beautiful Star.

The next morning, after having celebrated Holy Mass in a shelter which our party made for the purpose from poles covered with branches of fir, and after we had breakfasted and adjusted our packs, we continued our voyage, always ascending and following the shores of the River Nipisiquit, as far as the rapid commonly called Le Saut aux Loups

[1] Of course, there was also a "lean-to" shelter, of poles and fir boughs, with the fire in front. Voyagers in the winter woods camp thus to this day, and in ample comfort.

Marins, which marks the separation of the two routes leading to Mizamichis—one shorter but more difficult through the burnt woods, and another, [212] longer but easier, by the river.[1] The extreme desire I had to go without delay to our Cross-bearer Indians, in order there to commence the mission, made me decide so much the more easily to take the route by the burnt woods, which the Sieur Henaut and also the Indian had traversed a short time before ; and thus of one accord we left the river, which nevertheless would have spared us much trouble and fatigue had we followed it, as experience later made us know full well.

In order that you may understand what these burnt woods are, I will tell you that the heavens, being one day all on fire, full of tempest and thunder which rumbled and made itself heard [213] in all parts, a thunderbolt fell at a time when the

[1] The name of the fall where they left the Nepisiguit means, translated, The Seal Falls. The name has vanished with no other record than this, and we have no data for determining its location except such as our narrative affords. There are several rapids and small falls along the lower Nepisiguit within a few leagues of the basin, but the most prominent by far is the Pabineau Falls, some twelve miles above our author's probable starting point at Nepisiguit. This distance would agree well with their four or five leagues of progress the first day, together with a short distance on the second. Moreover the vicinity of this fall, or a little above it, as the map on a later page (175) will show, would offer the most natural starting place for a direct land route to the Fort of Richard Denys de Fronsac, which stood at the main Forks of the Miramichi, a little above the present Newcastle. All geographical probability would indicate that this land route followed the watershed approximately along the course now taken by the Intercolonial Railway ; for not only would such a route be very direct, but it would avoid the many densely wooded small valleys, and would take advantage of many open and easily traversed barrens, which lie along that course. It is probable, therefore, almost to certainty, that the Saut aux Loups Marins was the Pabineau Falls, though it seems unlikely that the name could have been descriptive, since seals could hardly have ascended the many rapids and small falls below.

The route from Nepisiguit to Miramichi by river, however, is perfectly well known, and has been fully described in local works (*Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, V., 1899, ii. 255 and XII., 1906, ii. 99). It ascended the Nepisiguit to Gordon Brook, crossed by a portage from this stream to Portage River, and thence followed this stream and the easily navigable Northwest Miramichi down to the Fort de Fronsac, as shown by the map on page 175.

dryness was extraordinary, and not merely set in flames all the woods and forests which lay between Mizamichis and Nipisiquit, but also burnt and consumed more than two hundred and fifty leagues of country in such a manner that nothing was to be seen except very tall and quite blackened trunks of trees, which showed in their frightful barrenness the evidence of a conflagration widespread and altogether astonishing.[1] This great extent of country is always covered with snow during the winter, and nothing is to be seen there except young shoots and little bushes, which appear more like islands distant two or three leagues one from another than like the woods or forests of Canada. In a [214] word, this fire was so furious and so violent, that the flames darted and embraced, so to speak, from one bank of the river to the other. For this reason it results that the moose and beaver have reappeared there only a long time after this sinister accident. A matter which gives more trouble to the voyagers who traverse these burnt woods is that they cannot find places to camp under shelter from the wind, nor wood suitable for warming themselves.[2] It was, nevertheless, in these sad solitudes, and in these wastes, more awful a thousand times than those of stony Arabia, that we lost our way, because we undertook to follow the tracks of some Indians who were hunting beaver : for, wishing [215] to examine the windings and turnings of the Indians and of these animals, we took a wrong route, and departed from that which without doubt

[1] This great woods' fire, if correctly described, must have equalled or surpassed the great Miramichi fire, the greatest woods' fire on record, which swept this region over a century and a half later (in 1825). A discussion of the limits of the latter fire is contained in the *Bulletin of the Natural History Society of New Brunswick*, V., 1906, 410, and there is mention of the former, in appropriate connection, in the same *Bulletin*, IV., 1901, 435. Denys also mentions great woods' fires, which he likewise attributes to lightning (*Description*, II. 349).

[2] Because, as I know from experience, the burnt and sapless trees, while still untouched by decay, are extremely hard to cut with the axe, and far inferior as camp fuel to the woodsman's favourite green paper birch.

was the most correct and certain. We marched three days continuously in the midst of these wastes, and with incredible trouble, to the extent that we were obliged to stop in order to rest from so much, so long, and so painful fatigue.

The next day we continued our route with new difficulties, caused by a great abundance of snow which had fallen the preceding night, and which well nigh made us despair entirely; for we were obliged to march from morning until evening in these snows, in which we [216] sank clear to the knees at every step we took. This march, extraordinarily painful and fatiguing, added to the dearth of provisions, there being no more than a small morsel of bread to eat each day, reduced us to extreme misery. Our Indian became tired out, and his wife with her little child aroused my compassion; and I tell you frankly, for my part, that I was completely done out.

The necessity, however, in which we were in every respect obliged us to continue our route, and it became necessarily march or die. Monsieur Henaut, Sieur de Barbaucannes, was the only one who had any more [217] courage left. He led the way; our Indian followed him, with his wife next, and I remained the last of the company, as being the most wearied by the road, which, however, I found easier and less fatiguing than the others because it was beaten and opened out by those who preceded me, a fact which was without doubt of great aid to me, and gave me much comfort.

Nevertheless, however hard this march was, I declare to you that it lost in my opinion a part of its rough and vexatious power through the hope and thought I had that we were approaching the River of Sainte-Croix[1]; and therefore it seemed to me frightful beyond [218] anything one can imagine, when the Sieur Henaut and the Indian told me that for three days we had been lost, that they no longer knew the route nor the way, and that it was necessary to

[1] That is, the Miramichi, to which our author himself gave the name of Sainte Croix. Consult the note under page 170 of his book.

abandon ourselves entirely to Providence and to go wheresoever it might please God to conduct us.

That news was the more dreadful to me since there was no chance of returning to Nipisiquit, because the snow which had fallen in great quantity since our departure had filled and covered all of our tracks. It was still snowing at the time, and we had, accordingly, to make a virtue of necessity and to march until night in order to find a place suitable [219] for camping.

I do not know how to express to you here what our anxieties were at finding ourselves in the midst of these frightful wastes, lacking everything most necessary to life, overwhelmed with weakness and fatigue, in the most difficult and rigorous part of winter, without provisions, and what is most distressing, without a guide and without a road. As a climax to our misery, there were three days on which we had eaten nothing but a little piece of bread at evening, and this then failed us entirely; so that, having been obliged to resort to the flour which our Indian had in his pack, we were reduced to throwing, morning and evening, two or [220] three handfuls into a pot of snow water, which we boiled; but this served rather to whiten the water than to nourish us. As my sole comfort, the Sieur Henaut told me that he had two pairs of Indian moccasins, with a fragment of dressed skin; and that if it came to the worst we could broil or boil them, and eat them together. Judge from this whether we were not truly deserving of compassion.

The night passed with new difficulties. A wind from the north-west, of an extraordinarily keen and penetrating coldness, well nigh froze us, because we had not been able to find wood enough to keep ourselves warm during the night; so that, [221] in order not to die of cold in our camp, we left it before daylight, with suffering which cannot be imagined. I came near being swallowed up in a deep gulch which was covered with snow, from which they had much trouble and

difficulty in drawing me out. I can even state that it would have been all up with me, if, by singular good luck, I had not struck against a large tree which was across the gulch ; and on this I remained awaiting the aid which they gave me in order that I might escape from this horrible danger, where I saw myself exposed within two fingers' breadth of death.

Scarcely was I a gun-shot from this precipice, when, wishing to cross a little river, one of my [222] snowshoes broke, and I fell into the water up to my waist. This obliged Monsieur Henaut and the Indian to seek promptly a place suitable for camping, and to make a fire to restore my warmth, because the cold commenced to grip me through my whole body. It was in this camp that the trifle of flour, which we had hitherto husbanded very carefully, was finished, as well as the bread ; and hunger drove us forth in the early morning to seek what Providence would give us.

From that time I comprehended perfectly well our evident danger of dying in the woods from hunger, weakness, and misery, if the Lord did not soon give us the means to escape from them. [223] As I felt that my strength was commencing to leave me, and that I was nearly exhausted, I renewed the first resolutions with which I had undertaken this sad voyage, and I offered once more to our Lord from my heart the troubles and fatigues which I endured for His glory and for the atonement of my sins. The single thought of a JESUS-CHRIST, dying upon the cross abandoned by all the world, giving us an admirable example of that sacrifice of our lives which we ought to make for the salvation of souls, joined to the thoughts I had upon the death of Saint Francis Xavier, dying in his little cabin destitute of all human succour, filled me [224] with joy and consolation in the midst of my troubles. And it is true that I was then persuaded, better than ever, that God has a treasure of favours and benedictions which he reserves especially for the missionaries who trust and abandon themselves entirely to the loving care

of His Providence amidst the most frightful dangers and perils of their missions and of their apostolic labours.

We had marched the whole day, but had not advanced far, as much because of the extreme weakness to which I was reduced, as on account of the difficulties of the road, when, whilst I was entirely occupied by these agreeable and holy reflections, Monsieur Henaut and the Indian, who preceded us, gave a [225] cry of joy and of cheer for the happy discovery they had made of the very fresh track of an Indian who had passed that morning on his way a-hunting. They both came back to assure me that all our troubles would soon be ended by our happy arrival at the Fort of the River of Sainte-Croix, which they hoped we should reach very soon. I was not insensible, any more than the others, to the joy which this happy event brought me ; but, indeed, as there is no pleasure in the world so pure that there is not present some admixture of grief and anxiety, the satisfaction we had just received was impaired by the uncertainty [226] whether we ought to follow or to retrace the newly discovered tracks. For we were in doubt whether this Indian had merely gone hunting, or had commenced one of these considerable voyages over a long extent of country, which they often make during the winter in order to visit their friends. Uncertain of the route we ought to take, we resolved at all hazards to cross these tracks and to continue our former course, in the hope that God would be our guide and have pity on us. He heard our vows and our prayers ; our Lord, satisfied with our fatigues and troubles, condescended [227] to console us in a manner which made us admire the wonderful ways of His divine Providence.

It is a custom usually observed among our Gaspesians never to return to camp at evening, or at least very rarely, by the same route by which they left it in the morning to go a-hunting. They take different routes in order to scour the country, and to explore a larger tract of land for evidences of

moose and beavers. God allowed, however, this Indian, whose tracks we had seen, to return upon his route to the place where we had crossed his way. He was surprised at first, but, guessing from our manner of [228] marching that those who had just passed were extremely wearied, he resolved to follow us, and came after us to help as much as he could. A certain muffled noise, caused by the rattling of his snowshoes and the movement of the branches across which he had to walk, compelled me to turn my head to discover whence it proceeded. You can judge of the joy that I felt at seeing this charitable Gaspesian who was coming towards me, and who would show us our road, by what you should yourself feel in a similar situation ; mine was so great that I redoubled my pace, quite [229] exhausted as I was, to tell the news to those who preceded me.

As the night was nearly upon us, and since, besides, we were weak and spiritless, he made us camp, and wished all by himself to undertake the trouble of cutting the wood necessary to warm us, and of putting the camp into condition for us to rest there. He made me a present of a partridge which he had killed in his hunting ; and Providence sent him two others soon after, as a reward for the charity which he had bestowed upon us. They were perched in the branches of a fir, as is the usual habit of the partridges of Canada. He killed them both by one shot of his gun, and they were all three placed in the kettle [230] to serve as a supper for five persons, all wearied with travel and with hunger as we then were.

Although the Indians are charitable beyond that which is supposed of them in Europe, nevertheless they look pretty often for entreaty when there is need of their aid, and especially when they are convinced that one cannot do without their assistance. Ours was of this character ; knowing perfectly well of what value he was to us in the unfortunate situation in which we found ourselves, he offered from time to time to act as our guide, but on condition, as he said, that we should give

him two dozen blankets, a barrel of flour and three of Indian corn, [231] a dozen cloaks, ten guns, with some powder and lead, and a host of other things which he wished to possess, in return for replacing us upon the right road, and conducting us to his camp. It was much, I avow; but in fact it was very little to ask of men who would willingly have given everything in the world in order to get release from such a bad fix as that in which we found ourselves unfortunately immersed, and from which we should have had much trouble to escape without the aid of this Indian.

The night passed a little more peacefully than those before it. It was necessary, however, to set out the next morning without taking any food. As our [232] little party was waiting until I had finished my Office, the Indian, who was acting as guide, becoming impatient because I remained so long a time kneeling in a place removed from the bustle of the camp, approached me, and, believing that I had some revelation, or had received the gift of prophecy, begged me in all seriousness to predict to him that which would happen to us during the day. "Thou speakest to God," said he to me, "thou teachest the way of the sun, thou art a Patriarch, thou art clever, and it must be believed that he who has made everything will have granted thy prayer. Tell me then, whether to-day we shall kill many moose and beavers with which to feast thee after the many fatigues and miseries which thou [233] hast suffered up to this time."

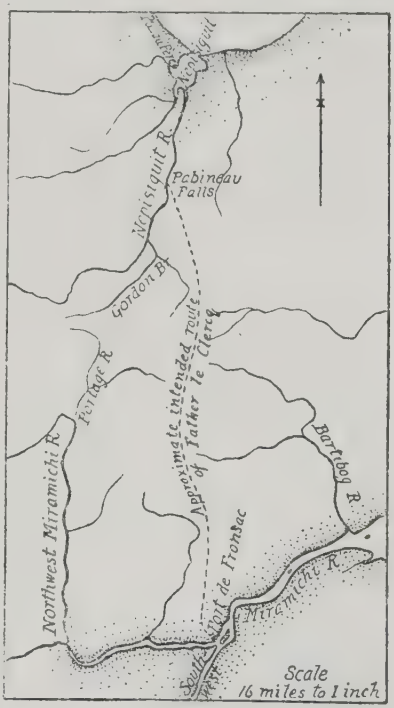
I was surprised enough by this address, and having answered him that God had not vouchsafed me this favour, of which I considered myself wholly unworthy, I made him understand that God, being the one Father of all men, who refuses not even food to the ravens nor to the smallest beasts of the field, we must hope also that Providence would give us the wherewithal to subsist, since he never abandoned his servants in their need, and that, if He made them suffer for a time in this world, it was in order to repay them eternally in Heaven.

Ejougouloumoüet, for that was the name of this Indian, who [234] was not yet baptized although he was fifty to sixty years old, could not understand these Christian truths. Prepossessed solely by the thought which he had, that God spoke intimately to the Patriarchs, he expressed to me his dissatisfaction, especially after I had told him that I did not know any place where he could find beavers, bears, or moose and that in a word it was necessary to rely entirely upon the care of divine Providence. "I am then," responded Ejougouloumoüet, "somewhat better than the Patriarchs, since God has spoken to me during my sleep, and has revealed to me that without fail, before it is midday, we shall kill moose and [235] beavers in abundance with which to feast ourselves. Let us start, and move on at once, and thou wilt see that the Indians have more cleverness than thou." It was necessary to follow him, much more in the hope of finding something to eat in his cabin, whither we were going, than along the route which he obliged us to take in order to find his moose and his beavers, which a hunger-starved imagination made him expect to meet at any moment. Nevertheless, his hopes were vain and profitless, and he was in fact obliged to admit that he had been too credulous, and that for the future he would believe no more in visions or in dreams, to which all these Indians are attached, even to the verge of superstition.

In order to confound his extravagant [236] credulity, and to convince him of the care which God takes of His servants, Providence permitted that when we expected it the least, about four o'clock in the afternoon, we found two large porcupines. These animals, which resemble rather closely the hedgehogs that are seen in France, were established in the hollow of a tree; from this they had eaten the bark, which served them as food. They have, as a rule, each its own den, and our Ejougouloumoüet was surprised, as we were, to see them thus living two together. One was taken straightway, and was loaded upon my shoulders to be taken

to the Indian woman, who had already lighted a fire in order to [237] cook it in the kettle. We made a very good meal of it. The broth seemed to us as nutritious as a good consommé, and we experienced in real truth that the proverb is very true which says, there is no better sauce than a good appetite. We carried the other porcupine to the camp of our Indian, where we found eight persons, who showed plainly enough in their thin and wholly emaciated faces the paucity of nourishment they had taken, and the hunger that these poor wretches had endured for a month, whilst they had been encamped on the bank of a river where they caught trout in very small quantity.[1] They had not more than five of these

[1] Our author, unfortunately, does not supply data sufficient to permit his route to be followed in detail, though there are many of us, interested in local geography and history, who would gladly know it exactly. It seems wholly probable that his company left the Nepisiguit at, or a little above, the Pabineau Falls, and took the watershed route as shown by the accompanying map. When Ejougouloumoüet found them, they were two days' journey from the Fort de Fronsac, which was at the Forks of Miramichi, and the second day's journey was, as the references to points and rocks sufficiently prove, along the main Miramichi itself. Hence Ejougouloumoüet's camp must have been on the bank of that river or of some large branch thereof. Considering that when lost they would very probably bear to the westward, where they knew the unmistakable river route lay, it is quite likely that this camp, a day's journey from the Fort de Fronsac for their enfeebled state, was on the Northwest Miramichi not far up its north-and-south part. On the other hand, if, totally lost, they had swung to the eastward, the river of the camp would have been



[328, *i.e.* 238] as their entire provisions when we arrived among them. These were placed in the kettle with our porcupine, and we ate them all together.

I was a good deal surprised to see a fine cross, embellished with beads, in the place of honour, and in the most important part of the camp, between the two wives which our Ejougouloumoüet possessed, one as his legitimate wife, and the other as his concubine, who had, said he, come miraculously from heaven to his aid at a time when he was abandoned by all the Indians, and cruelly afflicted with illness in the depths of the woods, he, his wife and his children, without any hope of human aid. [239] I took this cross respectfully between my hands in the presence of the entire company, and, finding in so beautiful a subject of piety a favourable opportunity to instruct these Indians, I made our Ejougouloumoüet understand that it was the mark of the Christian, and the sacred sign of our salvation: that it condemned by its purity the criminal bigamy in which he had lived heretofore: and that in a word he must do one of two things, either leave his concubine or renounce his cross in good earnest.

"If that is true," answered this pagan, "I would prefer a thousand times to abandon not only the wife who comes from heaven, but also my true wife and even my children [240] rather than to abandon the Cross which I have received from my ancestors by title of inheritance and by birthright. I wish ever to preserve it preciously as the honourable symbol which distinguishes the Indians of Mizamichis from all the other nations of New France." He promised me, accordingly, that he would leave this concubine, while at the same time the woman, perhaps secretly touched by

the Bartibog, a famous river for trout, and the camp must have been near its mouth. But this seems to be as far as we can carry the identification.

In my translation of the account of this voyage published in *Hay's Canadian History Readings*, I suggested, and mapped, a different route, under the supposition, since found to be wrong, that the Fort de Fronsac was at Burnt Church.

the instructions which I had just given to those in the camp, determined to return to her parents, and to have herself instructed in order to receive the Holy Baptism. This was indeed, without doubt, everything I could then hope from these poor barbarians.

We left them in [241] this good resolution, and, gathering new strength from our weakness through the hope that we had of arriving that evening at Monsieur de Fronsac's, we continued our journey. Scarcely had we made a half-league, when I was compelled to throw myself upon the snow because of a weakness of the heart and a dimness of vision which seized me, and from which I was able to recover only by aid of a dose of hyacinth confection, which was mixed with a little snow water in order that I might swallow it more easily. This remedy I was obliged to use for the rest of the journey, and it gave me the strength to follow, although with great difficulty, our little company which showed me the way.

[242] The Sieur Henaut, whose strength and spirit I could never admire enough, encouraged me the best that he possibly could, assuring me, at each point of land or of rocks which we reached, that he saw the Habitation and the Fort of Monsieur de Fronsac, and that there remained but a little of our way to accomplish in order to be delivered wholly from our troubles and to be consoled for our hardships. But, in fact, if the belief I accorded his words forced me sometimes to redouble my pace in the hope with which I flattered myself of arriving very soon, my weariness was increased in proportion when, having turned several points, I beheld neither the Habitation nor [243] the Fort de Fronsac. As a result, I would not believe anything he told me later, even when he showed me the actual point we had been seeking since the morning. The hunger which I suffered kept me from yielding to any reason, and the weakness to which I was reduced left me no more strength than was required to drag myself under shelter from the wind in a rather pleasing

place, where I lay down upon the snow, begging the Sieur Henaut with all my heart to leave me alone, and to go on with his company to Monsieur de Fronsac's. "For, in fact," I told him, "whether we are near or far matters not; if we have as little of the route [244] to make as you say, then go quickly and reach the fort without any delay; you will then send some of our Frenchmen in order to bring me provisions and to conduct me to Monsieur Denys de Fronsac's. But if we are still a long way from it, as I believe, I declare to you that I cannot go farther." Nothing that I could say to him had any effect in persuading him to go seek the rest of which he himself stood in very great need, and not for a single moment would he leave me. He encouraged me as well as he possibly could, and ordered the Indians to cut wood to warm us, [245] much preferring, as he told me, to remain in the camp where we were rather than to arrive a quarter of an hour before me at the dwelling. This little rest gave us new strength, and, deferring wholly through a reason of gratitude to the friendship and generosity of this faithful friend, I resolved to continue our route, so that finally, after having marched the space of a short half-league, we arrived in a storm of snow, which was falling in abundance, at the Fort and Habitation of Monsieur de Fronsac,[1] who

[1] The journey, as can easily be computed from facts in the narrative, occupied about ten days (it is now made daily within two hours!); and the date of their arrival was February 5 (1677) or thereabouts, as our author incidentally indicates on page 257 of his book.

The location of the Fort and Habitation of Fronsac, where Father le Clercq was so hospitably received, is not directly stated in any historical records, but it is settled practically beyond question by abundant circumstantial evidence, which is all discussed, in the biography of Richard Denys, in the *Collections of the New Brunswick Historical Society*, III., 1907, 29. In brief, documents exist which locate it positively in the near vicinity of the Forks of the Miramichi; Father Jumeau's map, contemporary and accurate, places a flag, the conventional symbol for a settlement, on the point on the north side of the river opposite the passage at the west end of Beaubears Island, while all other historical facts we possess, and all probabilities connected with the situation as a good site for a trading post, are in perfect harmony with this location.

did everything he could to restore us and to console us for our hardships. We were soon visited there by our Cross-bearer Indians, who live usually at Mizamichiche [246] which

The place is now an open field, sloping pleasantly to the water at a sandy and stony point forming an ideal landing-place. No local tradition of a French establishment at this place exists, but that is completely explained by the prominence of the traditions connected with the presence of the French in this vicinity in the troubled days following the Expulsion (1755–1759), and these have quite obliterated all earlier ones. Any ruins or remains of the establishment have long since been destroyed by the many buildings and other works, including a ferry landing, which have since occupied the site, if indeed the actual ground on which the establishment stood has not been washed away by the ever-encroaching sea.

It is altogether likely that the establishment was demolished by the same privateers which destroyed the settlement at Isle Percée in 1690. This supposition derives support not only from general probabilities, but from the fact that Sieur Degré, who is known to have been commander there in absence of Richard Denys de Fronsac, is recorded to have "retired with the English of Boston" (*Collections* above cited, 36), and very likely he was one of the French renegades mentioned by our author on page 6 of his book. It is very probable, also, that the well-known tradition given by Cooney in his *History of Northern New Brunswick and the District of Gaspé* (35), the one in which a church was burnt by an English captain in reprisal for the murder of six of his men by Indians, really applied to this expedition and the destruction of this settlement, for it certainly and positively has no connection with the burning of Burnt Church in 1758 (*Acadiensis*, VIII., 1908, 274, and evidence still unpublished, but later to appear in the *Collections* above cited).

Two other interesting contemporary references to this establishment exist. Richard Denys himself, in a memorial of 1688, writes that he "has built a fort of four bastions fortified with ten pieces of cannon of which four are of brass and six of iron, with the necessary balls, 16 hundredweight of powder, and in all 200 guns or muskets. He has built for himself a house of freestone,

is a beautiful river,[1] abounding in every kind of game and fish. It is distant about forty leagues from Isle Percée. The land there is rather fertile. We have since named it La Riviere de Sainte-Croix,[2] in commemoration and to the honour of that sacred symbol of our redemption, which is held in remarkable veneration among these pagan people.

The sorrowful accident which plunged us into the extremity of consternation, three or four days after our arrival, convinced us that we were in a land where the Cross, which, according to the tradition of their ancestors, had formerly overwhelmed the Indians with blessings, visited upon us instead much of its bitterness. [247] Our Indian woman, wife of Koucdedaoüi,[3] with whom we had come from Nipisiquit, was encamped, in the absence of her husband, quite close to the Fort of Monsieur de Fronsac with an

and he has also had another commenced for his men. . . . Four years ago he began to cultivate the land by hand, and it already produces a part of the grain, vegetables, fruits, grass, and other things which he requires. He expects this year to work it with oxen, and he has bought everything necessary for building a water-mill on his return" (*Collections* above cited, 38). Again Monseigneur de Saint Valier, afterwards Bishop of Quebec, who visited the establishment in 1686, thus writes of it in his book: "Miramichy is a very pleasing place upon the Rivière de Manne, at a league from that of Sainte Croix. There is a fort of four bastions formed of stakes, and in this fort a house where M. de Tronsac [*i.e.* Fronsac] has his residence" (*Estat present de l'Eglise*, 1688, 85). The name Manne is no doubt an abbreviated form of that which our author calls *Mirmenaganne* (page 193), the Indian name of the Northwest Miramichi.

It is possible, finally, that this establishment was older than Richard Denys' time, for his father appears to have had an establishment on the Miramichi before 1650, and it is quite probable that it was on the same advantageous site (*Champlain Society's Denys*, II, 161, 200).

[1] The origin of this name, now written Miramichi, is uncertain. It is discussed in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, VII., 1899, ii. 54, and II., 1896, ii. 252. The current derivation from a Micmac name meaning "happy retreat" is certainly erroneous, and probably the word is not Indian at all.

[2] A somewhat more detailed mention of this re-naming is given by our author on page 170.

[3] In another place and connection, at page 164 of his book, our author explains the meaning of this name, viz. *Pigeon-hawk.*

Indian woman of her acquaintance, who had an infant at the breast. Through lack of birch bark they covered their camp with branches of fir, and they found it convenient to make use of straw to rest upon during the night. The cold was extreme, and its rigour was increased by a wind from the north-west which blew with all its force, so that these women were compelled to make a much larger fire than usual. They went quietly to sleep without any presentiment of the evil which [248] was coming upon them ; but scarcely had these two unfortunate Indian women closed their eyes when the fire caught in the straw, and, making its way to the branches of fir, it consumed and reduced to ashes the entire wigwam. I leave it to be imagined to what extremity these poor women were reduced when they saw themselves completely shut in and surrounded by flames. They uttered at once cries so piercing that these reached our ears almost as soon as they left their mouths. It is safe to say that they would never have escaped from this terrible conflagration if one of these two Indian women, preserving throughout a presence of mind admirable in so pressing a danger, [249] had not made an opening in the wigwam, through which, all naked as she was, she threw herself, with her infant, into the midst of the snow. Her companion was not so prudent nor so fortunate. Almost immediately she lost her presence of mind, as well as her hope of saving herself, and, giving herself no further concern for her own life except for the sake of saving that of her dear infant which she held in her arms, she would not abandon it until her sight was obscured by a great burst of fire and flame, and she was compelled to let the child fall into the midst of the fire. It was a great piece of good fortune for her that she found herself, although by chance, at the place through which her companion had saved herself with her little infant. A flickering light [250] which appeared at first before our eyes, together with the wailing and the groaning of these poor unfortunate wretches, made us understand and comprehend,

almost at the same moment, the sorrowful accident which had happened. It was too piteous a sight for us to be content to remain only as simple spectators, as formerly was Nero at the burning of the city of Rome, or as was Alexander at that of Persepolis, which was reduced to ashes by the counsel of his concubines. We all rushed immediately to render such aid as we could.

Never was the piety of Æneas, who carried Anchises from the conflagration of Troy, nor that of those three noble children who saved their father from the [251] fires of Vesuvius, better exemplified than in these poor mothers who had tried to save their children from these devouring flames. One was lying in the snow with her infant, the other was still at the door of the wigwam without power to come out therefrom, and she suffered a grief so keen that she did not heed the sparks and coals falling continually upon her flesh. Everybody knows that the fir is a tree full of resin, which some call turpentine ; and since, through the violence of the fire, this gum fell all in flame upon the body of this Indian woman, it is probable that she would have expired along with her son in this horrible torment, if Monsieur Henaut [252] had not, by strength of arm, rescued her from this sinister conflagration.

I entered the wigwam, which was still all on fire, in order to try to save her child ; but it was too late, for this little innocent was smothered in the flames and half roasted. He died, in fact, a moment later in my arms, leaving me no other comfort, among so many matters for grief, than that of having baptized him before my departure from Nipisiquit. Then, falling upon my knees with this precious burden, I adored, with feelings of profound submission, the loving conduct of Providence in saving the souls of His predestined, since it would have been absolutely [253] impossible for me to baptize this infant, who was the first victim which heaven received from the mission which I made to our Cross-bearers.

I myself laid out the body of this little angel, and it was solemnly rendered the usual honours in our chapel, in order to make the Indians see the respect and the veneration which the Holy Church preserves sacredly for all the children which die in innocence after their baptism.

One cannot express the acute sorrow of this afflicted mother when she reflected upon the loss and the manner of death of an only son whom she dearly loved. Overwhelmed by grief and bitterness for the death of this dear [254] child, she closed her ears to everything that could be said to give her consolation in her misfortunes. She had a heart only for sighing, a tongue only for lamenting, eyes only for shedding tears, feet and hands only for stirring the coals and fumbling in the ashes in the effort to find there the one who was the principal cause of her grief. In a word, seized by a cruel despair, she would have strangled herself in our presence if she had not been prevented from executing her dastardly intention.

The first transports are pardonable, because they remove us from, and deprive us of, the free use of reason. Also it must be admitted that our Indian woman appeared in some [255] manner excusable, since all her actions were much more those of a woman distracted and transported by the violence of her grief than of a reasonable person, and it can be said that she only came out of her transports at the time when she was in condition to reflect that her misfortune was without remedy.

The Sieur Henaut, with his usual charity, took the care of dressing her wounds, and he would have cured them entirely if the ointments had not been lacking.[1] In default of our remedies the Indians wished to apply some of theirs, which only served to reduce this poor woman to the point of death,

[1] Sieur Enault was a physician, as a valuable document printed in the *Collections of the New Brunswick Historical Society* (III., 1907, 34) informs us; which fact, no doubt, explains our author's evident confidence in his skill.

whether because these Indian remedies were incompatible with our ointments [256] or because they delayed a little too long in making the first application. But the fact was that, after twenty-two days of suffering, the gangrene appeared in her wounds, and this produced a stench so horrible that no one could any longer approach her at all.

Monsieur de Fronsac used every effort to prevent me from seeing her again. But, after all, it was more just to defer to the rules of charity than to human reasoning of expediency and policy, and I willed to continue my services to her, being unable to make up my mind to abandon her until her death. She had been baptized and named Marie by one of our missionaries. I had [257] prepared her for confession, so that, having always performed the duties of a good Christian, especially towards the end of her illness, she made a general confession of her sins the morning of Ash Wednesday, and died at evening,[1] leaving me great hopes of her salvation.

The body remained all night in the wigwam, and Monsieur de Fronsac would by no means permit me to watch, as I desired. Two Frenchmen and two Indians were assigned to remain near the deceased during the night. Ejougouloumoüet was one of the number. He, imagining that the blessed taper was composed of moose's grease, ate it all up. [258] We might readily have been amused

[1] This mention of Ash Wednesday enables us to use certain data of the earlier pages to fix the approximate date of our author's voyage from Nepisiguit to Miramichi. The unfortunate woman apparently died, for such is the implication of the text, very soon after the gangrene appeared in her wounds, and this was twenty-two days after the fire (as our author relates on the preceding page); the fire, in turn, occurred three or four days after their arrival from Nepisiguit (page 246). Hence they arrived at Miramichi some twenty-six days before Ash Wednesday. Now Ash Wednesday in 1677, as my friend Rev. Father Gallen of Florence, Mass., has ascertained for me, fell on March 3rd, which fixes the date of the arrival as on or about February 5th. Since the journey occupied about ten days (as shown by the note on page 178 of this volume) they left Nepisiguit on or about January 26th.

thereby had we not been obliged to yield to the grief and the sadness which afflicted us as much as can be imagined.

Although we endeavoured to transport the body to the usual cemetery, it was nevertheless necessary to make the grave in the wigwam itself, because it was impossible to approach the body on account of the infection and the stench which issued from it. This was even such that the Sieur Henaut, wishing to wipe his face with his handkerchief, was extremely surprised to see it soaked with a very blue and livid sweat, which indicated sufficiently the evident danger of catching there some contagious malady. She was buried in her wigwam [259] after I had blessed her tomb, and then we said the Holy Mass for the repose of her soul in our chapel, where all the French and Indians assisted with much devotion.

Her husband, however, who knew nothing of all that had happened in his absence, returned from hunting two hours after we had buried this Indian woman. He lamented bitterly the death of his wife, and since he tenderly loved his child, he was much like another David, who asked every moment where was his dear Absalom. He often visited their tomb, and there one day, when on his knees, with hands and eyes raised towards [260] heaven, and his heart all rent with grief, he was heard to pronounce these words in the form of a prayer: "O great God, who governs the sun and the moon, who has created the moose, the otters, and the beavers, be appeased: be no more angry against me: and be satisfied with the misfortunes which overwhelm me. I had a wife; Thou hast taken her from me. I had a child that I loved even as myself; but I have none any more, because Thou hast willed it. Is that not enough? Grant me then for the future as much of good as now I endure of ill. Or, if Thou art not yet satisfied with that which I suffer in my heart, make me die as soon as possible, for it is impossible for me to live thus any

longer." [261] But, at length, as time is a wise physician who administers effective remedies to the keenest griefs, and as, besides, these people do not hold in high regard a man who grieves and is not consolable in even the most grievous accidents of human life, our Indian wished to give unmistakable evidence of the control which he had over his feelings. Hence he assembled the Cross-bearers to the feast of the dead, which he gave them in accordance with the usual custom of the country. He commenced it by a speech which explained succinctly the reason for which he had assembled them. Then he added a kind of funeral oration, in which he described the fine qualities of his wife and everything that her [262] ancestors had done of most importance for the interests of the nation. At length he finished his discourse by pronouncing a eulogy on his son, claiming that he would have become some day a good hunter, a great warrior, and the worthy heir of the valour and the bravery of his father.

A profound silence followed at once on this speech, and he stopped abruptly with his eyes fixed upon the earth as if he were plunged in the lowest of all the melancholies. This he did in order better to express the bitterness which he had in his heart because of the death of his wife and child. Then suddenly carrying his hand to his eyes, in order to wipe away some tears which he had shed before this assembly, he gave a cry of joy, and said, at the same [263] time, that if he had shed tears which he was unable to refuse to the dead persons whom he had loved so tenderly, he wished, nevertheless, to stop their flow in accord with the esteem which all the Indians had conceived for the greatness of his courage. He added that we were all mortal; that too much sadness and grief made Indians lose their spirit; and that, in fact, it was needful to console ourselves for all the grievous accidents which come to us in life, because He who has made all and who governs all things, has permitted it thus.

All those assembled answered this speech by three or four

whoops which they forced from the depths of their stomachs, saying, as usual [264] *hé, hé, hé.* It is thus that they express approval, as a rule, of the reasoning of the one who makes the speech. Our Koucdedaoüi had no sooner received these public approvals, than he set himself to dancing his very best, and to chanting some songs of war and the chase, in order to testify to the assembly that he had banished from his heart all the regret, grief, and sadness he had previously felt. After this he drank a good dram of brandy and gave the rest of the bottle to the oldest men, to be distributed to the assembly with the sagamite[1] of the feast.

It is a custom, generally observed by our Gaspesians, to reserve none at all of the things which have been in use by the sick when these [265] come to die, in order, say they, to remove so far as possible from before their eyes all objects which, as remembrances or memorials of their relatives and friends, could recall their troubles. They burn all the clothes which have been used by the deceased during life, or rather, they bury these with them, in order, say they, that the spirits of these things shall accompany their owners into the other world ; or else they present the things to strangers in gratitude for the services which these may have rendered to the deceased. Koucdedaoüi gave everything which his wife had possessed to the Indians who had aided her during her illness. He remained some days longer with us ; but, at length, either because he grew weary of staying with [266] the French, or because he did not wish to remain longer in a place which was for him so sad, he decided to leave us and to abandon the River of Sainte-Croix. I remained there until spring in order to carry on the mission and to prepare the Cross-bearers to receive the principles and the elements of Christianity.

It was not very difficult for me to find the subject for the

[1] On the meaning of this word consult the note to page 89 (page 108 of this volume).

first address which I was to make to these poor pagans. It was nearly the same as that of Saint Paul when he preached the Faith of JESUS-CHRIST for the first time in Athens to the Areopagites.

This great Apostle, having viewed that famous inscription [267] which the Athenians had caused to be graven in letters of gold on the front of the temple which they had dedicated to the Unknown God, *Ignoto Deo*, took advantage of this opportunity to make them understand that this Unknown God to whom they rendered their homage and worship was the very same who had made Heaven and Earth ; who was made man in the womb of a Virgin, and who, by a supreme act of love, had been willing to die upon the Cross for the salvation of all the human race. He made them understand also that nature had given tokens of its resentment during the mortal agonies of His Calvary, and that even the sun, from grief thereat, had suffered an eclipse so extraordinary that one of the chief men of the Areopagus, at [268] sight of it, cried out that either the God of Nature must be in suffering, or that the mechanism of the world was going to dissolve.

The usage of the Cross, and the honour which our Gaspesian pagans rendered to this sacred sign of our salvation, provided me with the same material for explaining to them the sacred mysteries, of which they were ignorant in the shades of their errors and their blindness. Accordingly, I made them understand that this Cross, which, by a special favour of heaven, they had been given to share, ought to lead them to the adoration and the worship of Him who had embraced it for love of us : that they had obligations even more strict than those of the other nations of New [269] France, to profess the faith of JESUS-CHRIST : and that to this end it was necessary for them to abandon their errors and to receive Baptism, without which they could not be saved. They appeared very well pleased and satisfied by this

discourse, and promised me to follow exactly the charitable advice which I had given them; and they all protested openly that they were indeed sorry their ancestors had neglected for so long a time the worship of the God of the Cross. They offered me their little children, and begged me to baptize them in the interval while they themselves were being instructed sufficiently to receive it.

I accorded this favour to five or six of these children, of which the eldest [270] of all was not over two years; and I have this consolation, that four of these little innocents are happy at present in glory, having died in happiness some time after their Baptism.

I leave to the reader the liberty of judging as he pleases as to the origin of the worship of the Cross among this pagan nation,[1] since I have no more solid foundation for persuading him of this truth than the testimony of the older Indians and of the French, which is confirmed by the *Relation* made of it by Monseigneur de Saint Vallier, now Bishop of Quebec.[2]

[1] The material which follows belongs logically with the preceding chapter, which is devoted to this subject of the worship of the cross among these Indians. It could well have been interpolated at page 186.

[2] This *Relation*, which differs in some details from that of our author, is contained in Monseigneur de Saint Valier's well-known book, *Estat present de l'Eglise*, of 1688, beginning at page 35. It reads thus in translation :—

"It would be difficult to believe that this river, which is called Rivière de la Croix, had not been thus named by Christians. It is nevertheless true that it is not they who have given it this name. It derives it from certain Indians, who from time immemorial are called Cruciantaux, because they preserve among them a particular respect for the Cross, although there appears to be not a vestige of evidence from which it can be conjectured that they have ever known the mystery of it. It would be very curious to be able to go to the first origin of this worship, which they render without thinking of it, to the salvation sign of the redemption of men. But as excess in the drinking of brandy, of which they are as enamoured as are all the other Indians, has during some time past caused the death of all the old men and a great number of the young people, it is very difficult to find among them persons capable of informing us, with any kind of certainty, as to the truth of this.

"If one trusts in the matter to one of the oldest men who was still living a few years ago, one will find without doubt something most remarkable

This I wish the more to do since I proposed in this history to describe matters solely as I have known them during [271] all the time that I have made the mission among our Cross-bearer Gaspesians.

Here, however, although in abstract, are some of the chief reasons which have compelled me to believe that the Cross

in that which it has been possible to learn from him. This man, aged a hundred or a hundred and twenty years, questioned one day by M. de Fronsac, son of M. Denis, said that he had seen the first ship from Europe which had landed in their country; that before its arrival they had already among them the usage of the Cross; that this usage had not been brought to them by strangers; and that everything he knew about it he had learned by tradition from his ancestors. This is then approximately how he explained himself.

"'A long time ago,' said he, 'our fathers were afflicted by a cruel famine which depopulated the nation. After having in vain invoked the demon through their juggleries, that is to say through their superstitious ceremonies, one of the oldest of them saw in a dream a young man who, in assuring him of their approaching deliverance through the virtue of the Cross, showed him three of these, of which he declared that one should serve them in public calamities, the other in deliberations and councils, and the third in voyages and perils.

"'On awakening he found nothing in his hands, but the image of these crosses remained so vividly impressed on his imagination that he immediately made some like those which he thought he had seen; and, relating to his children that which had occurred in his sleep, his family commenced from this time to place in the Cross that trust which communicated itself later to all the nation.

"'They all placed a cross of wood in one of the ends of their canoes, and wore upon their persons another of wampum which rested comfortably upon their breasts. Many wore one around the neck, and the pregnant women sewed one, made from red and blue stuff, upon that part of their garment which covered the womb, so as to place their progeny under the protection of the Cross. Finally, these poor folk, after having worn the Cross upon their bodies during their life, had it buried with them after death, or erected upon their tombs. The chief was distinguished from the commonalty in this, that he had a special one upon his shoulders adjoining that on his breast, and both had a border of porcupine quills dyed in red of the most vivid flame colour. Besides that, the three crosses of wood, each of two feet and a half in height, of which he used one in the front of his canoe for voyages, and the two others of which he set in the midst of his wigwam and at the door against perils and for councils, bore each as a mark of distinction three cross bars which were an ever present token of the vision of the three crosses.'"

had been held in veneration among these barbarians before the first arrival of the French in their country. For, wishing one day to make these pagans admit that the missionaries who had preceded me had taught them the manner in which they ought to worship the Cross, the leading person said to me, "Well, now, thou art a Patriarch. Thou wishest that we believe everything that thou tellest us, but thou art not willing to believe that which we tell thee. Thou art not yet forty years old,[1] and for only two hast thou dwelt with the Indians; and yet thou [272] pretendest to know our maxims, our traditions, and our customs better than our ancestors who have taught them to us. Dost thou not still see every day the old man Quioudo, who is more than a hundred and twenty years old? He saw the first ship which landed in our country.[2] He has repeated to thee often that the Indians of Mizamichis have not received from strangers the use of the Cross, and that his own knowledge of it has been derived through tradition from his fathers, who lived for at least as long a time as he. Accordingly, thou canst judge whether we received it before the French came to our coasts. But if thou hast still any difficulty in yielding to this argument, here is another which ought to [273] convince thee entirely of the truth which thou holdest in doubt. Thou hast sense, since thou art a Patriarch and since thou speakest

[1] The information about his age must have been given to the Indians by Father le Clercq himself, and must be accurate. This incident evidently occurred in 1677, on our author's first visit to Miramichi, as shown by the mention of two years' residence among the Indians. It therefore fixes the date of our author's birth as after 1637. But as the "forty years" is evidently a round number, such as appears always to have been used by the Indians in connection with expression of the ages of people, it does not necessarily mean that Father le Clercq was just under forty. As a whole, therefore, the present statement is consistent with the testimony of the census of 1681, which, as shown in the Introduction to this volume (page 3), fixes the date of our author's birth as 1640.

[2] Even if Quioudo's age is not exaggerated, he did not see the first ship, for this was in 1677, and Cartier was on this coast over one hundred and forty years earlier.

with God. Thou knowest that the nation of the Gaspesians extends from the Cape des Rosiers as far as Cape Breton : thou art not ignorant of the fact that the Indians of Ristigouche are our brothers and our compatriots, who speak the same language as ourselves : thou hast left them to come to see us[1] : thou hast instructed them : thou hast seen the old men who have been baptized by missionaries other than thee, although, nevertheless, we have been unfortunately deprived of this good fortune up to the present.[2] If, then, the Cross is the sacred symbol which distinguishes the Christians from the pagans, as thou hast taught us, tell us why the [274] Patriarchs should have given the usage of the Cross to us in preference to our brothers of Ristigouche, whom they have baptized but who nevertheless have not had the symbol of the Christian in veneration always, as have our ancestors who have never received Baptism ? Thou seest then plainly that it is not from the missionaries that we have obtained the mystery of the Cross."

It will be said that this reasoning is savage. That is true, I admit, but it is not for that reason less persuasive nor less convincing. For it is a fact that the Indians of Ristigouche are baptized, and that nevertheless they do not wear the Cross, but the figure of a salmon, which in old times they hung from the neck as [275] the mark of honour of their country. For it is to be noted that it has always been the custom of all our Gaspesians to wear some particular figures, which are somewhat like coats of arms, to distinguish them

[1] This shows that our author had been at Restigouche in the summer of 1676, since the remainder of his time in his mission is otherwise accounted for.

[2] This statement is incorrect, at least in so far as it implies that missionaries had not laboured among the Indians of Miramichi. Aside from less definite information, we have the positive statement that in 1646 Father Martin Lyonnes held a mission in the Bay of Miramichi (*Jesuit Relations*, Thwaites' edition, XXX. 143).

from the other Indians, in accordance with the different places where they ordinarily live.[1]

That is everything which I have been able to learn as to the origin of the worship of the Cross, and all that we have done to procure its re-establishment among these peoples, who have never had a perfect knowledge of any divinity, but have always been in the past, like the majority of them are to-day, indifferent in the matter of religion.

It is true that a number of our Gaspesians wish at present to be instructed, asking [276] Baptism ; and they even seem on the surface to be pretty good Christians after having been baptized. They are zealous for the usual morning and evening prayers, modest in the churches, and given to confessing their sins in order to approach worthily the Holy Communion. But it can be said that the number is very small of those who live according to the rules of Christianity, and who do not fall back into the irregularities of a brutal and wild life, which they do either because of the natural insensibility of these people to matters concerning their salvation, or by reason of drunkenness, of their delusions, of their superstitions, and other considerable defects to which they are greatly addicted. Hence it comes about that although several [277] missionaries have laboured greatly for the conversion of these pagans, nevertheless one never observes there, any more than among the other Indian nations of New France, any solidly established Christianity. And that is perhaps the reason why the Reverend Jesuit Fathers, who have cultivated with so much fervour and charity the missions which they had formerly at Cape Breton, Miscou, and Nipisiguit,[2] where our Gaspesians

[1] Our author refers here to the totem marks worn by the different Indian tribes ; and the fact that he thus makes the cross the totem of the Miramichi division of the Micmacs may explain the origin of their respect for the sign. Compare the discussion of the subject in the Introduction to this volume (pages 32–40).

[2] The full narratives of these missions have happily been preserved in the *Relations of the Jesuit Fathers*, and the reader may very easily follow them through the superb edition of Thwaites.

still reside to-day, have found it best to abandon them in order to establish others among more distant nations situated on the head of the river of Saint Lawrence, in the hope of making more considerable progress there, and this, furthermore, despite the fact that according to the testimony of these Reverend [278] Fathers, the Gaspesians were the most docile of all the Indians of New France, and the most susceptible to the instructions of Christianity.

It is true that the slight progress which I had made in the four years that I had laboured for the conversion of these peoples with as much application as was possible to me, added to a keen regret in not finding all the disposition that I desired on the part of my Gaspesians, of whom the majority, notwithstanding the indefatigable labours of so many illustrious and zealous missionaries who had preceded me, were Christians only in appearance, made me hesitate whether to abandon the work. For I had no reason to hope from it any more fortunate [279] success. However, in order not to be precipitate in an affair of such great consequence, I asked the Holy Spirit for the knowledge which was necessary in order that I might know what was the will of God, to which I might wholly yield myself.

I consulted the most enlightened persons, and especially the Reverend Father Valentin le Roux, our Superior, as well as God himself; and I can say with truth that the resolution which he communicated to me in my mission, served me as a guide, and induced me to remain there for the space of eight years longer in order to cultivate this vineyard of the Lord. Here are the exact words of his letter:[1]—

*I have received a very keen joy in learning through your two letters,* [280] *one of the fifteenth of April, the other of the*

[1] Its date is not given, but incidental evidence shows that it was written in 1679 after 6th July; consult the notes to page 303 of our author's book (page 204 of this volume).

*eighth of May, of the continuance of your health in the midst of the apostolic labours in which you employ your zeal with so much success and edification. It is true that in this extreme pleasure which I have had in receiving your letters, caused by that preference of esteem which I have for you personally and by the singular affection which I have for you, I do not know that I have ever received a keener grief since I have been in Canada than when I saw in one place in your last the intention which you have to leave your post, and even to return to France.*

*I confess to you, my very dear Father, that amidst a thousand mortifications which I receive daily, and which seem inseparable from my ministry, you are* [281] *the person upon whom I had placed the most reliance. The resolution which I had observed in you last year,*[1] *to make a perpetual sacrifice of your labours to our ancient missions, which to-day are finding a new birth through a special direction of Providence, and that unction of grace which seemed to me to be in you, consoled me infinitely. I have thanked God for it a thousand times since your departure, imploring him daily at the foot of his altars to cover you with his blessings. I saw also that our other fathers had the same intention, and I founded thereon my plans and my hopes for the glory of the Lord. I believed these intentions more sure and more certain on your part than on that of all the others. But I understand that my sins render me unworthy of this* [282] *consolation. To them I attribute this change which appears in you. I do not deserve to see our missions flourish in my time—missions of which the success depends solely upon the firmness and the perseverance of our religious. In that, my very dear Father, you will be always the master of your own fate. I reserve to myself only the right to explain, to exhort,*

[1] This phrase, which is repeated on pages 298 and 301, would imply that Father le Clercq and his Superior had met the previous year (1678), which in turn would imply that our author had then visited Quebec. It might equally be inferred, from these words alone, that his Superior had visited our author in his mission, but an expression a few lines later, viz. "since your departure" shows that the former interpretation is correct.

*to pray, and to implore on behalf of God, leaving after that an entire liberty to the religious, when, notwithstanding the insistent prayers of their Superior and friend, which represents the command of God, and despite the necessity in which our missions now are, they may desire to leave the work. For the sacrifice must be free and voluntary.*

*But nevertheless, my dear Father, consider, I beg you, the example of* Jesus-Christ, *that first missionary* [283] *of the world, of whom we ought to be the imitators, and to whom we ought to make return, through the persons of our brothers, for all which he has done for us and for them in coming to enlighten us as to the ways of salvation, through labours and continual obstacles. His mission has been permanent, and when once he had commenced it, he persevered therein all the rest of his life, and he consummated it by the sacrifice of his own blood.* Et nos debemus pro fratribus nostris animas ponere. *This is the height to which we ought to rise in order to render ourselves praiseworthy before him through our ministry; and although through his death he has entered into glory, this missionary does not cease to exercise still the same offices. He continues every day a kind of mission, in descending upon our altars, to which he is attached with an inviolable constancy.* [284] *He fills the functions thereof every moment through his inward grace and through the cares of a father's providence over his church.* Ecce ego vobiscum sum usque ad consummationem sæculi. *Such is the zeal of perseverance by which the Apostles and all apostolic men are controlled, and which will bear before God the evidence of the inviolable love that we will have for him. If the Apostles had been limited to a certain number of years, if they had been elevated into missionaries for thirty-six months,*[1] *the Evangelical truth would not have had so much*

[1] This expression would appear to mean that this was the length of time our author had then served as missionary. Since his labours among the Indians really began in the spring of 1676, it would not exceed a liberal thirty-six months to the time when this letter was written.

*success in the conversion of the world. They made of their work a vow and an inviolable necessity, and they never gave it up whilst they had a breath of life. Their exile from their native land never caused them regret, and in this they followed the example* [285] *of the Son of God who had left his native land in order to come into the world.* Exivi à patre, & veni in mundum. *Those inaccomplishable labours, hunger, poverty, persecutions, scorn, gibbets, wheels, ingratitude, and even the smallness of success for their troubles, have not rebuffed them. On the contrary, all these served only to inflame their zeal that they might acquit themselves in their mission with more diligence, in order to complete their course and the ministry of the apostolic word which they had received from God. What devotion would they not have given to the conversion of this new world which was then unknown, and of which God has destined us to be the Apostles?* Posuit tanquam morti destinatos. *And what reproach will God not make of you some day, for having withdrawn the sickle* [286] *from the harvest, almost as soon as you had placed it there? What account would you miss rendering to God for so many souls which would have perished through lack of your having persevered to announce to them the word of God, or for having sown the seed and afterward not having cultivated it? What ingratitude on your part to leave souls to perish for which* Jesus-Christ *has died, for want of giving the same devotion which* Jesus-Christ *has given for us even to his death?* Perit in tua scientia frater pro quo Christus mortuus est. *You are not ignorant, my very dear Father, that because of the diversity of tongues our missions are no more than bare amusements if one does not fix himself for some years in the principal ones. Two or three years are necessary to a religious before he is* [287] *really prepared to make himself understood; and if it is necessary to transfer him after that we shall have expended much labour uselessly, and we should be missionaries in name but not in fact. The heretics of New England, who are at your doors, would confound you on this point; and I do not*

*know what we could answer to God when he would reproach us for the little concern we should have for his glory. It is in fact a question, my dear Father, of establishing, or rather of re-establishing our missions, since they are as yet only commencing to move after an interval of forty years. It is a question of setting an example to those who will come after us; and if we place these affairs upon a basis of coming here only in passing, shall we not be responsible for the paucity of zeal of the others who act in* [288] *imitation of us? If we had the gift of tongues, as formerly the Apostles had, we would have some excuse in saying that another would serve as well as ourselves in carrying on a mission; but since God does not give us this favour, he desires from us that our zeal shall supply it through an habitual perseverance and application. Aside from this need for the language, the grace that God gives you for conveying much edification through your conversation: that charm and that unction which I have noted in you for the conversion of these poor blind ones: the knowledge that you have of their natures, and of the method of dealing with them: the influence that God has given you over these barbarians: these are advantages which another could acquire only through long labour, and which* [289] *indicate also a vocation, and a particular choice which God makes of you, for this mission. I have a thousand reasons which make me understand the necessity that we are under of remaining fixed in our missions. I shall try to give an example of them to my brothers through the perpetual sacrifice I have made of my repose, talent, honour, and life, to the apostolic ministry in this country. And I could believe that God would never pardon me if I were to weaken in my resolution, because of the bad example I would set to others, who, in imitation of me, would do the same. I see them all firm and resolute enough, but in truth I can tell you, that if you were to give way, since the others are very much decided by* [290] *the example of your fervour, to which I have often called their attention in order to inspirit them, you would destroy the order and the method of*

*the plans of God, and all that we are trying to advance through his holy grace in order to make the missions permanent. You would have an eternal grief in seeing the missions fall into decadence at the moment when they were beginning to gather that spirit of religion and virtue which ought to animate us in order to correspond to that which the Lord asks of us in our ministry. You are perhaps discouraged by the paucity of result you have noticed in the conversion of the Indians. But indeed, my dear Father, could you some day justify this excuse before God, being learned as you are in the truths of our faith? Consider, I pray you, that it is for us to* [291] *plant and to water, but that it is for God to grant the growth and to produce the fruits. We have sufficiently performed our duty when we have proclaimed the truth. It is not for us to render it fertile, but to recognise our nothingness and to adore the judgments of God, saying to him—* Quod debuimus facere fecimus, servi inutiles sumus. *Remember that when the Son of God gives the mission to his apostles, he orders them to preach the Gospel to all the nations—not only to those who will believe their word, but also to those who will never give it credence.* Qui crediderit salvus erit, qui non crediderit condemnabitur. *God draws his glory equally from the loss of some and from the salvation and sanctification of others;* [292] *but he will not fully derive his glory from those who do not believe except in so far as he will have had care to have the truth proclaimed to them. We have the advantage of making justification to God at the judgment, in the condemnation of the infidels who will not be converted by our words; and if we seek only the glory of God, a missionary should be much more content in the paucity of success and of fruits from the missions of this country than if he effected conversions as numerous as in the early church, and even in the last centuries in the East and West Indies, where one man baptized in one day as many as four to five thousand souls. For God is glorified in the stubbornness of our Indians and in their reprobation, after the faith has been announced to them, equally as in the conversion*

[293] *of others. You have still this advantage, that in great conversions one can find personal pleasure, glory, and keen satisfaction, in place of which in your lot you look only upon the glory of God, hidden in the shades of our faith. This sterility of your labours is not flattering to your pride, and you will find in them glory for eternity only when you will see God justified in the loss of these souls, and glorified by the care that you will have taken, and the diligence that you will have devoted, to their conversion. But will you be in position to do this if, after having outlined the work, you abandon it to another who will do the same after your example? Did the Son of God, who came chiefly to teach the* [294] *Jews,* Ad oves, quae perierunt domus Israël, *convert many of them, excepting a dozen vacillating Apostles and a few Disciples? What did he find in all the rest of the people except blindness and hardness of heart, reproaches, ingratitude, and at length an infamous death? But his whole idea was to justify God in their loss; and the purity and holiness of his intentions sustained him in the sterility of his labours. He persevered even unto death in his mission; he came to be the Saviour of all men, and he died for all. He died for those who damned themselves, as well as for the greatest of saints, in order that his blood might plead for justice, and might magnify the mercy of his Father in the judgment of the condemned. He believed that* [295] *his blood was not lavished to be shed* in ruinam, & in resurrectionem multorum, *provided that he could say,* quid ultra potui facere vineae meae? expectavi ut faceret uvas, & fecit labruscas. *Does he not wish that the seed of his word be sown upon callous hearts as well as upon those that are docile? And if discouragement were necessarily to follow from a paucity of fruit of our labours, where is the preacher who could ascend a second time into the pulpit even in the most catholic countries? So many voices are raised in France for the reformation of morals; but how many does one see effecting conversions? And for a million of sermons, of catechisms, of familiar instructions, how many persons are there who abate by a single point*

*their* [296] *vanity, their spirit of selfishness, their lewdness, slander, or resentment? These preachers have then no other resource than to say that they have performed that which God asks of their ministry, leaving him to effect the conversion or the sanctification through his inward grace, and finally to justify him some day in his judgment.* Ut justificeris in sermonibus tuis, & vincas cum judicaris. *It seems that the time and the hour of Providence has not yet come for the nations of this new world; the harvests are not yet white, it is true; but how do you know that God has not planned to grant it some day to our tears, our sighs, and our works, and that we shall not be blamable for the delays which* [297] *God may place in the way if we lack in firmness and constancy in our calling? At least, my dear Father, you can hope to save children, or dying old men, and even some adults, but particularly children, who are instructed little by little. And should you save but a single soul, it is worth more than the conquests of all the world after God has given his blood for it. The labours of your entire life would thus be very well employed, according to the principles of our faith; for Saint Ignace, Patriarch of the Fathers who are our colleagues in the conversion of this new world, would have considered himself happy if, as reward of his labours and the sacrifice of his life, he had been able to hope to convert a single one of the prostitutes of Rome. It cannot be* [298] *believed that the attraction of your native land could be the occasion or the object of your dissatisfaction, and perhaps of your vexation. We have made by our profession so broad a renunciation of father, mother, country, and friends, that all these ought to have no more charm for you. Your very calling in this new world, which is not different from that of the Apostles, ought to have caused the death of all such feelings of nature. Those holy men had no more a native country; or rather, the places to which they were sent took its place to them. I found you last year in a state of feeling conformable enough to those of grace upon this matter. You told me then that it was this exile from your country and relatives which pleased*

*you most, that you would never regret your calling in Canada on account of* [299] *this consideration, and that you even saw indeed that it would be the source of your salvation. Now it would mean, my very dear Father, that you have very soon changed your ideas on that matter, or else that you have misunderstood the grace that God would have done you—if you were to get wearied in the midst of your course and to form plans so opposed to those of God for your person, and to the attributes of his holy grace. This is especially true at the present juncture when certain persons, who make much of us outwardly, would not perhaps be sorry to see you recalled by superior orders. Do you know that, since two years past, His Grace*[1] *is urging me not to allow our missionaries to remain longer than three years attached to the same mission? I see clearly that he is misled by the devices of* [300] *demons, in the integrity of his intentions, to wreck by this means the enterprises of his zeal and our own; and you do not perceive that you only favour these plans of the spirit of darkness*

[1] The Bishop of Quebec. This statement concerning the Bishop's views as to the three year limit receives ample and practical confirmation in the document which follows, and which I owe to the kind interest of M. Philéas Gagnon. The translation has been made by Professor W. T. Raymond of the University of New Brunswick, and revised by l'Abbé Lindsay of Quebec.

"Francis, to Brother Christian le Clerc, a priest of the Recollect Order, our beloved in Christ, greeting in the Lord: in order that, in and about Isle Percée, whither we are sending you, you may have the power of hearing the penitents in secret confession, and also of granting them absolution, we grant you that privilege for three years only, to be reckoned from the giving of these presents, and we also bestow upon you the further power of discharging there all the functions of a parish priest. Given, etc., on the eleventh day of October in the sixteen hundred and seventy-fifth year.

"FRANCIS, Bishop of Quebec.'

"*Franciscus, etc. Dilecto nobis in xsto Fratri Christiano le Clerc, Presbytero Recollecto, Salutem in Dmno, ut in regione Insulae perforatae quò te mittimus poenitentes a secretis confessionis audire, eosdemque absolvere possis, tibi licentiam concedimus ad tres annos dumtaxat a datâ pntm computandos et ibidem oia parochialia munia exercere valeas, tibi tenore pntium facultatem impertimur. Datum etc., die undecima octobris, anni sexcentesimi septuagesimi quinti.*

"*Franciscus Quebecensis episcopus.*"

(From Volume A of *Registre de l'Evêque de Québec*, 1660–1705 in Archives of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Quebec).

*to the prejudice of the French and the Indians, who have entire confidence in you, as Monsieur Richard Denys de Fronsac writes me is the case. I should never come to an end, my dear Father, if I followed the flow of my pen upon this matter, and upon the mortification that your plan causes me. It is the demon who thwarts me in the person that I believed the most intrepid; but I shall pray to God with so much ardour to grant you perseverance that I hope still for a change, and that at least you will think no more of leaving the missions.*

[301] *Besides, if it is only a question of coming to winter with us, you know well that I shall find therein a very great joy. You could return next summer, if you resume, as I hope you will, your first intention—that which I saw you had last year. Otherwise you will remain in our home here as long as you please; you will be always the master of this after having heard my arguments, and that which the unction of grace will inspire in you. If you come to winter with us I pray you to prepare Monsieur Richard Denys so that he will not expect any one until next spring, since we have at present only four priests in our home, out of sixteen, of whom twelve of you are scattered among the missions. The dear Father Exuper, whose zeal and virtue you know, arrived* [302] *a short time since to our aid. It is necessary also that I go up to the Fort of Frontenac next summer,*[1] *with Monsieur le comte de Frontenac our Governor, to arrange for the discovery of Mexico by virtue of the orders of the court, and to visit our missions. My presence is also necessary at Mont-Roïal, where the people ask, with more insistence than ever, an establishment of our Order,*[2] *and Messieurs of the*

[1] It seems plain, however, that it was later in the same summer that he made this journey. This letter was written after July 6, 1679, but our author's other book (*First Establishment of the Faith*, Shea's translation, II. 112) seems to show beyond doubt that the journey was made in 1679. Moreover, this date fits more naturally with the known facts as to the presence of the missionaries at Fort Frontenac, as noted later in the same paragraph.

[2] The petition to Frontenac, dated 1678, is printed by Réveillaud, in Le Tac, *Histoire chronologique*, 193.

*Seminary, who are its Seigniors, have consented to this. The dear Father Zenobbe Membré has been at the Fort since last Spring, with Fathers Gabriël de la Ribourd, Loüis Hennepin, and Luc Buisset, and they are to go on the mission in the discoveries that are to be made.*[1] *It is, as you see, a large community for this country. Friar Leonard is extremely* [303] *ill and it is not yet known what will be the outcome. The Venerable Father Luc Filliastre is also unwell, but he is in no danger. We have two lay brothers, novices, who are pretty well; one is a cousin of the late Monsieur Bazire, and the other is the son of Master George of the Coste de Beaupré.*[2] *All of our dear and venerable Fathers and Friar Leonard salute you with affection. Nothing new has happened here that is worth writing, except the death of Monsieur Filion, Priest, who was drowned in the river.*[3] *He is universally regretted as a perfectly accomplished missionary. Pray God for me; make your offerings every day for the interests of our poor mission; and be assured that I am* [304] *with affection,* Your very humble and very obedient Servant in Jesus-Christ, Friar Valentin le Roux, unworthy Superior of the Recollects of New France.

It cannot be believed how much consolation the reading of this letter gave me. Moved keenly by the will of God, and recognising it visibly in that of my Superior, I conceived

[1] The expedition for which preparation was thus in progress was that of La Salle, which resulted in the exploration of the Mississippi to its mouth. It is fully described by our author in the second volume of his other book, the *Premier Etablissement de la Foy*.

[2] These two novices are mentioned by our author in his *First Establishment of the Faith* (II. 96); their names were Charles Bazire and Didacus Pelletier. The "late Monsieur" was Charles Bazire, one of the Seigniors of Isle Percée. (Consult the note to page 77 of this volume). Fathers Hugolin and Odoric write me that they entered into the novitiate in the spring of 1679, which shows that this letter was written after that date.

[3] Father Filion was drowned, as Fathers Hugolin and Odoric inform me (citing Tanguay's *Répertoire du Clergé Canadien*), on July 6, 1679; and this date helps to fix the time of the writing of this letter.

new hopes for the conversion of these peoples. I resolved to fix myself in this mission, and to await with so much the more patience the fruits which it might please the Lord to produce there through his grace and his pity, because among the great number of our Indians who seemed [305] insensible and impenetrable to the commonest verities of Christianity, I saw some Gaspesian families who laboured with diligence for their salvation, took pleasure in having themselves instructed, assisted with devotion at the Holy Mass, and lived as tolerably good Christians.

The wandering and vagabond life of these peoples being unquestionably one of the chief obstacles to their conversion, I solicited Monsieur Denys de Fronsac to grant us a tract of land at Nipisiguit suitable for the cultivation of the soil, in order that we might render the Indians sedentary, settle them down, and civilise them among us. This Seignior, who desired passionately to see [306] Christianity established in that vast extent of country which he possessed, favoured the idea with pleasure. He had made the principal persons of our Indians accept the proposal, and form the resolution to do it; but the considerable loss which he suffered when his vessel perished at Isle Percée in the most violent tempest that had ever been seen in those parts, added to the delay of two ships which failed two consecutive years to bring him, in accordance with their obligation, all the things which were necessary for the support of his establishments, broke off all the measures we had taken not only to establish a sedentary mission at Nipisiguit, but also at Cape Breton, where the [307] Reverend Father Valentin le Roux, our Superior, according to the plan which we had formed, was to send two of our missionaries.[1]

[1] This plan probably originated that of 1685 whereby Richard Denys de Fronsac granted to the Priests of the Seminary at Quebec three tracts of land, each three leagues square, at Restigouche, Miramichi, and Cape Breton, for sedentary missions. The plan proved abortive, though an attempt was made to establish one at Miramichi. Its history, and all the documents in the case (in translation) have been printed in the biography of Richard Denys

These grievous accidents, however, did not discourage me from continuing my mission in order to preserve in piety the little group of Christians who formed all my consolation amidst an infinity of annoyances which overwhelmed me. For I saw among the old men, on the one hand, nothing but a surprising insensibility towards receiving Christianity, and on the other, an eagerness and an invincible obstinacy in these same Indians to follow and to believe the errors, the superstitions, and the fabulous traditions of their ancestors, the most extravagant of which is, in my opinion, that [308] which concerns the immortality of the soul.

de Fronsac in the *Collections of the New Brunswick Historical Society*, III., 1906, 21.

Our author's belief in the desirability of rendering the Indians sedentary is further attested in the only reference to him which occurs in the *Jesuit Relations*. Father Jacques Bigot, in 1683–84, wrote thus in connection with the Sillery Mission: "The Reverend Father Chrestien, a Recollet,—who during most of the time, is as you know, in the countries of the Gaspessiens, Instructing them with very fervent zeal,—told me some Days ago that he desired only one favor for these Gaspessiens. That is, to see them come into our mission, to which he was urging them as much as he could. Those who are here from that nation are doing well" (Thwaites' edition, LXIII. 71).

## CHAPTER XII

*On the Belief of the Gaspesians concerning the Immortality of the Soul*

THOSE who, through erroneous belief, like an Epicurus and a Sardanapalus, have made the soul die with the body, were indeed worthy of compassion, since they themselves wished to cease to be men, in order to become like the beasts. And it must be confessed that Pythagoras, all learned as he was, hardly really knew the excellence of a reasonable soul when he lodged it after death [309] through his metempsychosis, in the bodies of the vilest and the most unclean beasts of the earth. Our Gaspesians have never followed either the one or the other of these two opinions, although the idea which they formerly held, and which some hold still to-day, as to the immortality of the soul, is no less ridiculous than the reason itself which has convinced them that our souls are immortal. This is why, all immersed and buried as they have been during several centuries in a profound ignorance of our divine mysteries, they have never known what dignity, grandeur, and sanctity the reasonable soul possesses, whether with respect to its nature, or with respect to its end, [310] which is no other than God himself. Consequently one ought not to be astonished if error and imposture have been the sole foundations of their belief in this matter, which is based on the tradition of their ancestors. This is to the effect that one of the most prominent men of the nation fell dangerously ill, and after having lost the use of all his faculties in the strange convulsions of his disease, came to

himself, and said to the Indians, who asked him where he had been so long, that he came from the Land of Souls, where all the souls of the Gaspesians who died betook themselves after their death. He added that by an extraordinary favour, which had never before been accorded to anyone whatsoever, Papkootparout,[1] [311] governor and ruler of this country, had given him permission to return to the world, in order to give the Gaspesians news of the Land of Souls, which had been up to that time unknown to them, and to present to them on his behalf certain fruits, which he gave assurance were the food of those souls, which he was going to rejoin for ever. He died in fact in ending these words ; and this imposture, which they took for an indubitable truth, was more than enough to persuade them that souls, after departure from their bodies, had a place to which they went to remain. It did not require anything more to make some of the more hardy of our Indians determine to make a voyage thereto in body and in spirit [312] during their lives, since this land was distant and separated from them only by a passage of forty to fifty leagues over a pond that could be crossed with ease by fording.

A favourable opportunity to carry out their curious resolution very soon presented itself through a chance to render service to one of their friends who, unable to console himself for the death of his only son, whom he loved tenderly, implored them all, and engaged them by the usual presents, to keep him company in the voyage which he had resolved to make to the Land of Souls in order thence to bring back his son. He had not much trouble to persuade to this voyage men who asked nothing better than to undertake it. They were [313] very soon all ready to start and to begin this perilous venture, which still to this day causes astonishment

[1] Nowhere have I been able to find any other reference to Papkootparout by name. Yet the individual very clearly represents the same who is the hero of the Nanibozhu legend widely spread among the Algonquian tribes. The subject is fully discussed by A. F. Chamberlain in the *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, IV., 1891, 193, and V., 1892, 291.

in all the Gaspesian nation, for it had then never heard tell of an enterprise so extraordinary. However, these voyagers, furnished with all the provisions they needed, and armed with their bows, arrows, quivers, clubs, and with a number of poles of nine to ten feet in height, took to the water, and, with much trouble and fatigue, travelled by forced marches. The evening having arrived, they stuck some of their poles into the sand in order to form a kind of arbour or camp, in which they might rest during the night, something which they [314] did every night in the continuation of this arduous voyage, which lasted until several among them were dead of fatigue. The five or six others who remained still alive, arrived happily at length in the Land of Souls, which they had sought so eagerly.

Our Gaspesians, in common with all the other Indians of New France, have believed up to the present that there is in every thing, even in such as are inanimate, a particular spirit which follows deceased persons into the other world, in order to render them as much service after death as these had received therefrom during life. Consequently, they say that our voyagers were equally surprised and comforted to see [315] on their arrival an infinity of spirits of moose, beavers, dogs, canoes, and snowshoes, which hovered pleasingly before their eyes, and which, by I know not what unknown language, made them understand that these things were all in the service of their fathers. But a moment later they thought they should die of fear and terror when, approaching a wigwam like those which they had in their own country, they saw a man, or rather a giant, armed with a mighty club, and with bow, arrows, and quiver, who, with his eyes gleaming with anger, and a tone of voice which indicated the completeness of his wrath, spoke to them in these words; "Whoever you are, prepare [316] yourselves to die, since you have had the temerity to make this journey, and to come all alive into the Land of the Dead. For I am Papkootparout the guardian,

the master, the governor, and the ruler of all souls." In fact, distracted to fury as he was at the outrage our Indians had committed, he was about to slay them with great blows of that horrible club which he had in his hand, when this poor father, keenly penetrated by grief for the death of his only son, implored him, more by tears and sighs than by words, to excuse the temerity of this enterprise, which in truth deserved all punishment from a just anger, if he was not willing to soften the rigour of it [317] out of consideration for a father who considered himself blamable only because he had too much tenderness and affection for his child. "Discharge against us if thou wilt, all the arrows of thy quiver; crush me by the weight of thy club," continued this afflicted father, presenting to him his stomach and his head to receive the blows of the one and of the other, "since thou art the absolute master of my life and my death; but indeed, if there still remain in thee any sentiments of humanity, of tenderness, and of compassion for mortals, I beg thee to accept the presents which we have brought from the Land of the Living, and to receive us among the number of thy friends." These words, so submissive and so [318] respectful, touched the heart of this little Pluto with compassion, and he, becoming alive to the grief of this afflicted father, told him to be of good courage: that he would pardon him this time for the outrage he had committed: and that finally, to overwhelm him with favours and with consolation, he would give him before his departure the soul of his son; but that in awaiting this extraordinary favour, he wished to amuse himself with him, and to play a hand of Ledelstaganne,[1] which is the usual game of our Gaspesians.

This friendly discourse dissipated entirely all the uneasiness

[1] This game is again mentioned by our author at page 508 of his book, and in a note thereto in this volume (page 294) it is briefly described. It was, and is, the great gambling game of the Micmacs, and always aroused the most intense interest among them. The word is somewhat differently spelled on page 324.

and apprehension of our voyagers, who staked at the play everything of importance which they had brought [319] from Gaspesia. Papkootparout staked, for his part, Indian corn, tobacco, and some fruits, which he assured them were the food of these souls. They played with close application from morning until evening. Our voyagers, however, remained the victors. They won the Indian corn and the tobacco of Papkootparout, who gave both to them with so much the more pleasure, since he believed these men deserved to live who had had the good fortune to win all the most precious and rarest things which the dead possessed in the Land of Souls. He commanded them to plant these in Gaspesia, assuring them that all the nation would receive therefrom an inconceivable advantage. [320] This, say our Indians of to-day, is the manner in which the Indian corn and the tobacco have come into their country, according to the tradition of their ancestors.

Whilst the father was rejoicing in his good fortune, it happened that the son arrived invisibly in the wigwam. The chant of a number of spirits, and the rejoicing that was made among these souls was, in fact, heard very distinctly. But this was not that which the father had asked. He hoped, in accord with the promise which had been made him, to obtain the soul of his son, which remained always invisible, but which became in an instant the size of a nut by the command of Papkootparout, who took it in [321] his hands, wrapped it very closely in a little bag, and gave it to our Indian. Therewith he gave him orders to return at once to his own country : to lay out, immediately after his arrival, the body of his son in a wigwam made for the purpose : to replace this soul in the body : and above all to take care that there be no opening, for fear, said he to the father, lest the soul come out through that and return to this country which it was leaving only with extreme repugnance.

The father received with joy this animated bag, and took

leave of this Indian Pluto, after having seen and examined attentively everything which there was of much importance in the principality of Papkootparout. [322] That is to say, he saw the place of shades where lay the wicked souls ; this was overlaid with nothing but dried up and badly arranged branches of fir. But the place of the good Indians had nothing except that which was charming and agreeable, with an infinity of fine barks adorning the outside and the inside of their wigwams, into which the sun came to comfort them twice each day, renewing the branches of fir and of cedar, which never lost their natural verdure. Finally, there was an infinity of spirits of dogs, canoes, snowshoes, bows, and arrows, of which the souls were making use for their pleasure.

Note, if you please, that ever since this imaginary voyage the Indians have not only believed [323] that souls were immortal, but they have also been persuaded, by a strange fancy, that in everything of which they made use, such as canoes, snowshoes, bows, arrows, and other things, there is a particular spirit which would always accompany after death the one who made use thereof during life ; and it is actually for this reason, and in this foolish fancy, that they bury with deceased persons everything which these possessed while on the earth, in the belief that each article in particular renders them the same service in the Land of Souls that it did to its owner when alive.

Our voyagers, however, returned joyously into their own country, and having arrived there [324] they gave to all the Gaspesian nation a full account of the marvels which they had seen in the Land of Souls, and commanded all the Indians, on behalf of Papkootparout, to plant forthwith the Indian corn and the tobacco which they had won in playing with him at Leldestaganne. The orders which were given them on behalf of the governor of souls were faithfully executed, and they cultivated with success the Indian corn and the tobacco for the space of several years. But the negligence of their

ancestors, say they, deprives them to-day of all these conveniences so useful and so essential to the nation as a whole.

One knows not how to express the astonishment and the [325] joy of these people when they heard of all these marvellous fancies, and that the father had brought back in a bag his son's soul, which would instruct them in everything from the moment when it was seated again in the body. The extreme impatience which these Gaspesians felt to learn news of the other world induced them to build promptly a wigwam in the very manner Papkootparout had directed. Their hopes, however, were vain and useless, for the father, having entrusted the bag to the care of an Indian woman, in order to assist and to dance more freely at the public festivals which were made for his happy return, this woman had the curiosity to open it, and the soul escaped immediately [326] and returned whence it had come.[1] The father, on hearing the news thereof, died of chagrin, and followed his son to the Land of Souls, to the great regret of all the Gaspesian nation. This it is, and this only, which makes our Indians believe in the immortality of souls.

From these false premises, based upon a tradition so fabulous, they have drawn these extravagant conclusions,—that everything is animated and that souls are nothing other than the ghost of that which had been animated : that the rational soul is a sombre and black image of the man himself : that it had feet, hands, a mouth, a head, and all other parts of the [327] human body : that it had still the same needs for drinking, for eating, for clothing, for hunting and fishing, as

[1] In Father le Jeune's *Relation* of 1634 is a legend which is identical with this in motive, if, indeed, they are not different versions of the same story. It reads: "A certain Savage had received from Messou the gift of immortality in a little package, with a strict injunction not to open it; while he kept it closed he was immortal, but his wife, being curious and incredulous, wished to see what was inside this present; and having opened it, it all flew away, and since then the Savages have been subject to death" (*Jesuit Relations*, Thwaites' edition, VI. 159).

when it was in the body, whence it comes that in their revels and feasts they always serve a portion to these souls which are walking, say they, in the vicinity of the wigwams of their relatives and of their friends : that they went hunting the souls of beavers and of moose with the souls of their snowshoes, bows, and arrows : that the wicked, on their arrival at the Land of Souls, danced and leaped with great violence, eating only the bark of rotten trees, in punishment for their crimes, for a certain number of years indicated by Papkootparou (*sic*) : [228, *i.e.* 328] that the good, on the contrary, lived in great repose at a place removed from the noise of the wicked, eating when it pleased them and amusing themselves with the hunting of beavers and of moose, whose spirits allowed themselves to be taken with ease. Such is the reason why our Gaspesians have always observed inviolably the custom of burying with the deceased everything which was in their use during life.

[329] CHAPTER XIII

*On the Superstitions of the Gaspesians*[1]

IT seems that the peoples who have been the most addicted to idolatry have been also the most superstitious. Hence it comes that the Romans, in order to distinguish themselves from all the nations of the world by religion, as well as by their victorious and triumphant arms, did wish to retain among them the idols of all the peoples whom they had conquered; and to these they rendered their homage and their adoration. Their blindness had even reached to such a point of superstition that the [330] frivolous remarks of their diviners upon the flight and the food of birds, or upon the entrails of animals, held entire sway over the Roman Empire; nor were they permitted to undertake or to abandon any enterprise of importance without consulting these kinds of oracles, augurs, and soothsayers, who were, in their opinion, the interpreters of the will of the Gods. Similar criminal maxims and ridiculous observations are still to-day in force among our Gaspesians, who observe in the impostures of their jugglers all of the empty observations and superstitions which the Romans recognised of old in the ministry of their diviners.

In fact these Indians imagine [331] that certain ones among them have communication with the Devil, from whom they hope to learn that which they wish to know, or to obtain

[1] A number of passages in the following pages bear so close a resemblance to parts of the *Relation* of Father le Jeune of 1634 as to leave no doubt that our author made use of that *Relation* in preparing this chapter. The subject is discussed more fully in the Introduction to the present volume (page 18).

that which they ask. They believe that in all their maladies there is, in the part afflicted, a Devil, or germ, which these barbarians, whom we call jugglers, have the power to make come out, and they believe that these jugglers can restore health to the sick through their breathings, their songs, and the horrible postures which they take in their wigwams. They imagine also that their jugglers can know from their Devil, whom they call Oüahich,[1] the best places for hunting, and that all the dreams of these impostors are just so many revelations and prophesies, of which the success [332] and the realisation seem to them infallible. This credulity of a people who are extremely susceptible to these follies, and to all sorts of errors, has brought the jugglers so much into credit that these master frauds pass for the most important persons of the nation. In a word, that one is the most esteemed who appears to have the strongest Oüahich, and who makes himself distinguished among the others by the most extraordinary and most infallible results.

Several of our French have believed, a little too easily, that these juggleries are nothing but trifles and child's play, and that no belief should be placed in what the jugglers say as to the invocation which they make to the Devil in these [333] superstitious and criminal juggleries. I am willing to admit that in some of these invocations there is very often nothing but empty talk; and accordingly it is perhaps these particular and wholly puerile juggleries which have given a basis for some to infer too readily that the others have in them nothing diabolical. It is true that I have never been able to discover any pact, explicit or implicit, between the jugglers and the Devil; but I cannot persuade myself on that account that the Devil is not predominant in their nonsense, and in the impostures which they use to beguile these people and to remove them just so much

[1] On the origin of this word see the note under page 47 (page 90 of this volume).

farther from the knowledge of the true God. For in fact it is difficult to believe that it is by natural means that a juggler [334] makes trees appear to be all on fire, and to burn visibly without being consumed, or gives the blow of death to Indians, even if forty to fifty leagues distant, when he buries his knife or his sword in the earth and draws forth the one or the other all covered with blood, saying that such a one is dead, who in fact does die and expire at the same moment that the juggler pronounces the sentence of death against him.[1]

It is not, either, by natural means that, with the little bow they use, one of which a juggler gave me with his jugglers' bag, they wound, and sometimes kill, children in the wombs of their mothers, when they discharge their arrows simply upon the representation of these little [335] innocents, which they sketch and represent on purpose, the best that they can, upon some piece of beaver or moose skin.[2]

Judge from this whether it must not be admitted that there is something diabolical in these extraordinary results. Our Gaspesians, however, have so much esteem for their jugglers that, when in trouble, they seek those who pass for the most famous (just as among us the sick in their ills have recourse to the most clever physicians). They are convinced also that these frauds can surely cure their ills, and aid them in chasing out the Devil, or the germ, which they believe to be enclosed in the afflicted part. They summon [336] the juggler and have him enter the wigwam of the sick person. This *Bouhinne*[3] informs himself exactly as to the nature of

[1] Our author here seems to have in mind the incident fully described by Father le Jeune in his *Relation* of 1634 (*Jesuit Relations*, Thwaites' edition, VI. 195–199).

[2] This matter is again mentioned by our author at pages 347 and 348 of his book.

[3] This word occurs also on pages 339 and 517 (as Bouhine). It is pure Micmac, given by Rand as *Booöin* (*English-Micmac Dictionary*, 163), meaning "a magician." The word occurs often in Micmac legends for a mighty mythical magician.

the illness, and after having made the sick one hope that he will cause recovery, he asks and receives the present that he wishes, having the right to choose the most important, most beautiful, and the best article in the wigwam of the sick person who asks recovery of the juggler, and who implores him to obtain this from his Oühaiche, speaking to him these words, *Emkadoui*,[1] as if he were to say, "Lend me thy Devil." The juggler answers him, "If thou wishest that I employ him in thy service, it is necessary that thou givest me" such and such "presents." He has no sooner received them than he chants some song in praise of the Oüahiche, and makes some [337] postures and frightful contortions: he comes near to, and draws back from, the sick man: he blows several times upon the affected part: he plants and drives deep into the ground a stick, to which he attaches a cord, and through this he passes his head as if he would strangle himself. Here he makes his invocations until he has worked himself all into a sweat and lather, making believe that, because of all these shameful and violent contortions, the Devil has at length come out, and that he even holds him bound in order that he may grant health to the sick person. He then calls the Indians and makes them enter the wigwam; and he shows them the cord which, says he, holds the Devil enchained. He cuts from it a piece, and thus lets him escape, promising [338] that the sick man will infallibly get well. Each one testifies to the juggler his gratitude for the service by means of the usual presents; and they all sing in unison some song to the praise of the Devil, for the sake of rendering him propitious and favourable not only to the sick man, but also to the Gaspesian nation.

The thing which seems to me most strange in the surprising blindness of these peoples concerning their jugglery, is that they juggle with the dead bodies as if they were living,

[1] This word also is Micmac. Rand gives *ĕmkadooeegā* as meaning "to lend" (*op. cit.*, 157).

so much are they persuaded that the Devil, or germ, which they call by the name of *Tchougis*[1] or of Witchcraft, is the cause of all their maladies, and that it remains for some time in the [339] body of the sick man after his death. They sufficiently demonstrated this belief through an action which without doubt will seem to you genuinely cruel and wholly inhuman.

One of the most prominent of our Gaspesians having fallen dangerously ill, he had the most expert Bouhinne called in order to restore him to health. But having expired in the midst of the hubbub of the invocations and blowings of this juggler, all his relations assembled in order to assist at the funeral services of him who had always been an honour to their family. They lamented together their misfortune and gave the usual feasts of the dead. The nearest relative gave the funeral oration, with a [340] long discourse upon the most glorious actions which the deceased had performed on behalf of the nation. He began in a very moderate tone of voice, but at length, distracted as he was by the obvious grief which he felt for the death of his friend, he appeared suddenly to become filled with rage and fury. Then he said to those who accompanied him, that they must needs take vengeance on the Devil, which, not content with having caused the death of the bravest and most spirited of all the Gaspesians, still remained in the heart of the deceased to prevent him from reviving and to torment him after his death, as it had persecuted him cruelly during his life. He was believed, and all with one consent descended on the body, [341] which was exposed upon a kind of staging built by them in the wigwam. They opened the belly, and the juggler, after having torn out the heart, took it between his hands, and,

[1] This is plainly the same word as the modern Micmac *Choojech'*, meaning "a worm" (Rand, *English-Micmac Dictionary*, 284). The idea involved in the use of this word "worm" is more accurately rendered in modern language by "germ," as mentioned in a note on page 90 of the present volume.

with a movement of indignation against the Tchougis, cut it into pieces as many as there were persons, and distributed these to the whole assembly. Each ate his part of it, in order, as they said, to take vengeance on the Devil, who was in the heart of the dead man. This barbarous and cruel action occurred only four or five leagues from the place where I was, and I learned it from the very persons who assisted in this horrible feast, at which anger and rage brought out all [342] of the most inhuman attributes imaginable.[1]

Our Gaspesians are so addicted to their jugglery that it can be said this vice is natural and hereditary with them. This is why, when one wishes to draw them from it, something which cannot be done except with a great deal of trouble, they have enough malice to say to the missionaries that these have not much sense to disapprove of their blowing on their sick, because the missionaries themselves make breathings when they baptize children, and that if the patriarchs have the intention of chasing out the Devil, or sin, by their breathings and their exorcisms, the Indians have also no other design than to chase out the germ, or the Devil, from the body of the sick man.

[343] You will take notice that each juggler has his own particular bag in which are all the articles that he uses in his jugglery. Some have the picture of their Oüahich under the form of a wolverene,[2] others under form of a monster, or of a man without a head. One of these bags has come into my hands, having been given me by a juggler for the purpose of testifying to me that he wished to pray to God and to be instructed. I received him with so much the more joy, in that I had been hoping for a long time to gain this soul to God by making him leave his errors in order to follow the

[1] On other cases of cannibalism among the Micmacs, consult the note under page 105 of our author's book (page 115 of this volume).

[2] This word in the original is *Quinquajou*, on which consult the note under page 491 of our author's book (page 285 of this volume).

truths of Christianity. He delivered the bag into my hands with the intention of becoming a Christian, giving me notice that [344] if I preserved it to send it to France, and to make it go out of the country, I should not live more than four or five days, and that if I threw it into the fire, I ought to be apprehensive lest the house be reduced at once to ashes, because of the extraordinary effects which his Oüahich would cause when it found itself in the flames.

It is well to treat the Indians with consideration, and sometimes to delay instructing them until they have removed the obstacle which is opposed to their conversion. This gives them more esteem and veneration for Christianity, which they then believe is not compatible with their errors. This person had several times testified to me that he wished to be baptized [345] in order to enter with the others into the "Wigwam of JESUS," that he might pray to the God of the Sun. I knew, however, that he was one of the most famous jugglers of all this nation, a fact which obliged me to treat him with some indifference every time that he spoke to me of instructing him. He understood very well that all his advances would be useless if he did not change his conduct, and if he did not renounce his Oüahich for ever. I told him that all the promises he had made me up to that time had been without result, and that if his heart would speak wholly good he must give me more sincere indications of it than he had in the past. "Ah," said he to me, "thou believest then that I wish always to deceive thee, as I have done up to [346] the present! Thou deceivest thyself, and in order to convince thee effectively that I have a genuine disposition to abandon my errors, and to come to prayer, take," said he to me, "my jugglery-bag which I place in thy hands in order never more to make use of it."

Here is the inventory of that which I found in this little bag of the Devil. It was made of the skin of an entire head of a moose, with the exception of the ears, which were removed.

There was, first of all, this juggler's Oüahich, which was a stone of the size of a nut wrapped in a box which he called the house of his Devil. Then there was a bit of bark on which was a figure, hideous enough, [347] made from black and white wampum, and representing some monster which could not be well distinguished, for it was neither the representation of a man nor of any animal, but rather in the shape of a little wolverene, which was adorned with black and white beadwork. That one, say the jugglers, is the master Devil, or Oüahich. There was, in addition, a little bow a foot in length, together with a cord, two fathoms long, interlaced with porcupine quills. It is this fatal bow which they use to cause the death of little children in the wombs of their mothers. I utilised this cord to make a line for fishing trout, and with it I took more than two hundred, in three hours' time, in a place where they [348] were very abundant. That surprised our Indians a little—to see that I made so little account of a thing which the jugglers esteem so much.

In addition to these things, this bag contained also a fragment of bark, wrapped in a delicate and very thin skin, on which were represented some little children, birds, bears, beavers, and moose. Against these the juggler, using his little bow, shot his arrow at pleasure, in order to cause the death of the children or of some other thing of which the figure is represented upon this bit of bark. Finally, I found there a stick, a good foot in length, adorned with white and red porcupine quills ; at its end were attached several straps [349] of a half-foot in length, and two dozen dew-claws of moose. It is with this stick that he makes a devilish noise, using these dew-claws as sounders—an arrangement which seems more suitable for amusing little children than for juggling. Finally, the last article in the bag was a wooden bird, which they carry with them when they go hunting, with the idea that it will enable them to kill waterfowl in abundance.

Our Indian juggler was, however, much troubled as to what had become of his bag, and as to the use I had made of it. Five to six weeks after he had given it to me, he wished to inform himself on this point, and came for the purpose to the wigwam where I was. I told him that he had no further need [350] to be concerned about his bag, which had deserved to be thrown into the fire, since it was the property of the Devil who had dwelt therein so long a time, and that no ill had befallen either me or the house, although in giving it to me he had threatened me with some misfortune. Being convinced straightway that I had burnt it, he said, "Alas! I have indeed discovered as much during the voyages I have made since I have given it to thee, for I have been hungry and I have been weary, something which never happened to me when I had my bag. I used to take my Devil in my hands and press it strongly against my stomach. 'Hey, how is this,' I used to say to him, 'wilt thou permit that I be overwhelmed by hunger and fatigue, thou who hast never abandoned me? Grant, [351] for mercy's sake, that I get something to eat; give me some comfort in the fatigues and the need which overwhelm me.' He would hear my prayer and promptly grant my vows." I made him admit, however, in showing him his Oüahich, that this was another relic of his fancy and of his foolish imaginings, indicating to him several incidents in which he had suffered much without having received any aid from his Devil, whose virtue was so feeble that it had not the power to aid or comfort itself in the excess of its sufferings.

Some of these jugglers also meddle with predictions of future affairs, and in such a way that if their predictions [352] are found correct, as happens sometimes by chance, they derive credit and reputation from this fact. If, on the contrary, they are found false, as is usually the case, they get out of it by saying that their Devil is angry against the whole nation. It is a very surprising thing that this

impertinent excuse, far from discrediting the jugglers, procures them considerable presents; these are made them in order to appease the anger of this Devil, who, through the ministry of these jugglers, abuses these people and plays easily on their simplicity.[1]

Our poor Gaspesians were formerly tormented by the Devil, who often beat them very cruelly, and even terrified them by [353] hideous spectres and horrible phantoms to such an extent that, on some occasions, frightful carcasses have been seen to fall in the midst of their wigwams, a circumstance which caused to the Indians so much terror that sometimes they fell dead upon the spot.

As on occasions which make even the hardy lose courage, there is always found some person of determination, so it happened in this, that one of our Indians proposed alone by himself to avenge the outrages which the Devils were commit-

[1] The literature treating of the customs of the North American Indians abounds in references to the jugglers. One of the most interesting of the early Canadian accounts is that of Father le Caron, of 1624, which is worth citation here: "There is no nation but has its jugglers, whom some consider sorcerers; but it is not likely that there is in their case any real pact or communication with the devil, who nevertheless rules in their deceit and imposture, which he employs to deceive these people and remove them the more from the knowledge of the true God; for they all have faith in these jugglers, although they every day fail to keep their word. These impostors are regarded as prophets who predict the future from the Almighty. They boast of making rain and clear weather, calm and storm, the fecundity or sterility of the earth, fortunate or unsuccessful hunts; they act as physicians, applying remedies which have often no healing power. Nothing is so horrible as the cries, noise, racket, fury, and contortions of these cheats when they begin to juggle and make their kind of enchantment. They have, however, great dexterity; for, as they heal and predict only by chance, they have a thousand tricks to deceive these savages when the event does not answer their expectation and the predictions and remedies of these pretended prophets and physicians, who do nothing without presents and recompense. If, indeed, these jugglers are not adroit in getting credit and turning their very blunders to account when the person dies or the enterprise fails in the desired success, the juggler is sometimes executed on the spot without any other formality." (*First Establishment of the Faith*, I. 219.) Accounts of the Jugglers or Medicine-men among our Micmacs are given by all writers upon our Indians, by Lescarbot, Biard, Denys, Diéreville, and Maillard.

ting in all the wigwams of the nation. He conceived, in fact, the plan of killing him who had tormented them cruelly for so long a time. He even assured the Indians that he had no doubt as to the success [354] of his undertaking, and that there was nothing for them to do but to rejoice, for, he said, he knew exactly the route by which the Devil came among them. It was a little brook between two rocks, where he undertook to camp with his gun between his arms. One of our Frenchmen having found him in that posture asked him what he was doing, and whom he was awaiting. "Whom am I awaiting," answered he fiercely, "I am awaiting the Devil in order to kill him, to tear his heart from his belly, and after that to remove his scalp, in punishment and vengeance for the outrages and the insults which he has done us up to the present time. Too long has he been tormenting us, and the time has now arrived for me to deliver the Gaspesians from [355] these misfortunes. Let him come; let him appear. I await him without stirring."

It is known that since they have been instructed in our holy mysteries, especially those whom we have baptized, they are no more beaten or tormented by the Devil in the manner in which formerly they were before they had received the first and most necessary of our sacraments.

If these peoples pay so much attention, as you have just seen, to their juggleries, they observe with no less exactness certain ridiculous and superstitious customs. Thus, the young unmarried men never eat roast porcupine, imagining that they would not travel faster than this animal, which [356] moves very slowly. It is, however, permissible for them to eat it boiled without any risk.

The little foetuses of bears, moose, otters, beavers, and porcupines, which are still inside the bellies of their mothers, are delicate morsels which are reserved for the old men, the young men not being permitted to taste them, because they would feel, said they, great pains in the feet when they went

hunting. Through the same reasoning it is also forbidden them to eat the entrails of bears, marrow, or certain other delicate morsels, these dainty bits being reserved exclusively for the old men.

The bones of the beaver are not given to the dogs, since [357] these would lose, according to the opinion of the Indians, the senses needed for the hunting of the beaver. No more are they thrown into the rivers, because the Indians fear lest the spirit of the bones of this animal would promptly carry the news to the other beavers, which would desert the country in order to escape the same misfortune.[1]

They never burned, further, the bones of the fawn of the moose, nor the carcass of martens ; and they also take much precaution against giving the same to the dogs ; for they would not be able any longer to capture any of these animals in hunting if the spirits of the martens and of the fawns of the moose were to inform their own kind of the bad treatment they had received among the Indians.

[358] If they take some beavers by trapping, custom wills that they be opened in public, and that the meat remain two days upon poles in the smoke before it is placed in the kettle. It is also necessary to take great care that the soup does not fall into the fire, and sedulously to preserve the bones, because the contrary is a portent of evil, or of some misfortune for all the nation.

In my presence one time a leading man of the nation

[1] On this matter Father le Caron wrote in 1624, "They have an insane superstition against profaning certain bones of elk, beaver, and other beasts, or letting their dogs gnaw them. They preserve them carefully or throw them into a river. They pretend that the souls of these animals come to see how their bodies are treated, and go and tell the living beasts and those that are dead ; so that if they are ill-treated the beasts of the same kind will no longer allow themselves to be taken either in this world or the next." (*First Establishment of the Faith*, I. 220.) The subject is also discussed in a manner suggesting that our author had the work before him, by Father le Jeune in his *Relation* of 1634 (*Jesuit Relations*, Thwaites' edition, VI. 211). Other superstitions, of like nature, are mentioned by Diéreville, *Voyage*, 164.

threw the foot of an owl into the kettle at a solemn feast, as a sure omen that his son, who had killed it at the age of five years, would become some day a great hunter, and the most valiant warrior of the world.

[359] The young men never eat the hearts of bears, for fear of getting out of breath in travelling, and of lacking courage in case of need. If some hunter has killed, or taken in a trap, one of these animals, many precautions are taken to prevent its entering by the usual door of the wigwam. Custom wills, and superstition orders, that a new door be made on the right or the left, because, say they, the Indian women do not deserve to pass through the place by which the bear enters the wigwam.[1] The girls, and the women who have not yet had children, leave the wigwam at the moment the bear approaches, and they never return there until it is wholly eaten.

Our Gaspesians are still so credulous about dreams [360] that they yield easily to everything which their imagination or the Devil puts into their heads when sleeping; and this is so much the case among them that dreams will make them come to conclusions upon a given subject quite contrary to those which they had earlier formed.

A matter which is yet more surprising is this—they observe still to this day certain ceremonies of which they do not know the origin, giving no other reasons than that their ancestors have always practised the same thing. The first is this, that the women and girls, when they suffer the inconveniences usual to their sex, are accounted unclean. At that time they are not permitted to eat with the others, but they must [361] have their separate kettle, and live by themselves. The girls are not allowed, during that time, to eat any beaver, and those who eat of it are reputed bad; for the

[1] Evidently many superstitions clustered about the hunting of the bear, for Father le Jeune in his *Relation* of 1634, gives others as prevalent among the Montagnais (*Jesuit Relations*, Thwaites' edition, VI. 217).

Indians are convinced, they say, that the beaver, which has sense, would no longer allow itself to be taken by the Indians if it had been eaten by their unclean daughters. Widows never eat of that which has been killed by the young men ; it is necessary that a married man, an old man, or a prominent person of the nation shall be the one who hunts or fishes for their support. So scrupulously do they observe this superstitious custom that they still at this day relate with admiration how a Gaspesian widow [362] allowed herself to die of hunger rather than eat moose or beaver which was left in her wigwam even in abundance, because it was killed by young men, and widows were not permitted to eat it.

In the winterings I have made with the Indians in the woods, I have seen one of these widows who remained three days without eating, with as much cheerfulness as if she had the best fare in the world. I said everything I could to her to make her break her Lent, for it is thus that they name this abstinence, but it was in vain ; and I could never persuade her to eat, although there was meat in abundance in her wigwam. [363] Even her children murmured against me because I solicited their mother to abandon the customs of their ancestors, saying to me that the Indians had their manner of living, as well as the French, and that we should follow our maxims without wishing to oblige them to abandon theirs. This woman begged me to accompany the Indians in a hunt for beaver, to which they had invited me in order to give me the entertainment of it ; and she assured me that she would willingly eat that which I might kill, if I had enough cleverness to capture any, because she considered me as their father and as one of their elders. I was fortunate enough to take two of them, of which I broke the [364] heads. I carried them to her wigwam, and made her a present thereof. She ate them both all alone by herself, for she was not permitted to eat with the others, nor the others to eat with her. They observe the same thing after their confinements,

during a month, or two, according to their inclination ; and during all that time it is a kind of infamy, and an evil omen, if they drink from the kettles or from the bark dishes which are in daily use, because, say these barbarians, good hunting of moose or beaver cannot be made when that happens.

As our Indians perceive that much honour is accorded to the missionaries, and that they have [365] given themselves in respect and reverence the title of Patriarch, some of these barbarians have often been seen meddling with, and affecting to perform, the office and functions of missionary, even to hearing confession, like us, from their fellow-countrymen. So therefore, when persons of this kind wish to give authority to that which they say, and to set themselves up as patriarchs, they make our Gaspesians believe that they have received some particular gift from heaven, as in the case of one from Kenebec,[1] who said that he had received an image from heaven. This was, however, only a picture which had been given him when he was trading with our French.

It is a surprising fact that this ambition to act the patriarch does not only prevail among the men, [366] but even the women meddle therewith. These, in usurping the quality and the name of *religieuses*, say certain prayers in their own fashion, and affect a manner of living more reserved than that of the commonalty of Indians, who allow themselves to be dazzled by the glamour of a false and ridiculous devotion. They look upon these women as extraordinary persons, whom they believe to hold converse, to speak familiarly, and to hold communication with the sun, which they have all adored as their divinity. Not long ago, we had a famous one of them who, by her extravagant superstitions, encouraged the same in these poor Indians. I had an extreme desire to see her, but she died in the woods without the baptism that I had the intention to [367] give her if I had been so happy as to render

[1] This phrase in the original is *celuy de Kenibeki*; I presume it simply refers to some Indian from the Kenebec River.

her worthy of it. This aged woman, who counted more than a hundred and fourteen [1] years since her birth, had as the basis for all her ridiculous and superstitious devotions, some beads of jet, which were the remains of an unthreaded rosary. These she carefully preserved, and gave them only to those who were her friends, protesting to them, meanwhile, that the gift which she gave them had come originally from heaven, which was always continuing to give her the same favour just so many times as she, in order to worship the sun, went out from her wigwam and rendered it her homage and adoration. "I have only, then," said she to them, "to hold up my hand and to open it, in order to bring down from [368] heaven these mysterious beads, which have the power and the property not only of succouring the Indians in their sicknesses and all their most pressing necessities, but also of preserving them from surprise, from persecution, and from the fury of their enemies." It can truly be said that if some one of these people would devote himself wholly to goodness, and would take care to instruct the others, he could accomplish prodigies among them, since they would easily believe everything that a man of their nation would tell them. This imposture, then, that these rosary beads came from heaven, was so well received by those who gloried in possessing some of them, that such persons preserved them as they did the things which they held most dear in the world; [369] and it angered these persons beyond endurance to contradict them in a foolishness which passed in their esteem for something divine and sacred. Such was the sentiment of an Indian woman who had asked baptism of me, and whom I instructed to this end during my winter at Nipisiguit. She had, as a relative of that woman patriarch, five mysterious rosary beads which she kept wrapped up with

[1] Other instances of advanced ages claimed to be reached by the Indians are mentioned on pages 84, 272, and 408 of our author's book. No doubt these are all greatly exaggerated, the round numbers used in most cases being conformable to such a suspicion.

much care. She showed them to me, wishing to persuade me that it was a present which Heaven had made to this pretended *religieuse*. This trait of superstition which I perceived in this catechumen made me resolve to defer her baptism, though I acquainted her of [370] the obstacle which she had raised thereto by her false and foolish idea concerning these rosary beads, which had come from France. And I told her that if she had as much eagerness for baptism as she had testified to me, she could give me no more obvious proofs of it than by placing these beads in my hands. She was a good deal surprised by this discourse. She promised me, however, although in a somewhat faint-hearted manner, that she would do everything I desired in this matter. She let me see them, and when I had them in my hands, I wondered at the simplicity of this creature. I hid one of them, and of the five which she had given me, I returned to her only four. She asked me, much embarrassed, [371] where the fifth was? I pretended to be ignorant of the number which she had given me, and I made as if to seek among the branches of fir upon which I was then seated. This catechumen, as well as her whole family, being then persuaded that I had inadvertently dropped this mysterious bead, she herself, together with all the others, made a search for it so thorough that there remained nothing in the wigwam which was not moved several times from its place. I had some trouble to keep serious when I saw all this amusing disarrangement of the housekeeping; and little was necessary to make me burst into laughter when an old Indian woman, considering that all these researches were in vain, commenced to complain of [372] the little care I had taken to preserve so precious a thing. She told me, with tears in her eyes, that she had a mortal regret for a loss so considerable: that it was very easy to see that this bead had come from Heaven, since it had vanished from their wigwam so suddenly in order to fly into the womb of the sun, from which it would descend a second time when the woman

patriarch had made her usual prayer : that all incredulous as I had seemed up to that time to everything the Gaspesians had told me as to the holiness of that aged woman, and of the familiar conversation which she had daily with God, she would, however, make me understand the truth thereof when we went in the spring, as we were proposing, [373] to the wigwam of this woman patriarch,[1] where I should find without fail the bead which I had lost. She repeated the same thing to me during several days, and with so much importunity that I wondered at her folly and her superstitions. The most convincing reasons that I adduced to undeceive her were useless ; for, closing her ears to everything I could say to inspire more correct sentiments in her, she railed against me with so much anger and violence that I judged it suitable to undeceive her at once, and to convince her of the error in which she was, something which was quite easy for me when I showed her the rosary bead and the surprising error for which she was [374] responsible. She was extremely surprised, and frankly admitted to me that she had no sense. They all profited by my instructions, and our catechumen gladly gave me the four other beads, which she had kept carefully among her most important possessions. Some of our French, who had been in the wigwam of this aged Gaspesian woman, assured me that she held also in singular veneration a King of Hearts, the foot of a glass, and a kind of medal, and that she worshipped these trifles with so much respect that she prostrated herself before them as before her divinities. She was of the Cross-bearer nation, as it was easy [375] to see by her own cross, which she had placed in the most honourable part of her wigwam, and which she had beautified with bead-work, wampum, painting, and porcupine quills. The pleasing

[1] She lived at Miramichi, as is proved by the reference on the next page, to her membership among the Cross-bearers. This little incident evidently occurred during our author's first winter at Nepisiguit, between September 1676 and January 1677.

mixture thereof represented several and separate figures of everything which was in her devotions. She placed it usually between her and the French, obliging them to make their prayers before her cross, whilst from her side she made her own prayers, according to her custom, before her King of Hearts and her other divinities. These the Indians buried with her after her death, convinced as they were that she would go to be a patriarch in the other world, and that she would not have the fate of other mortal men [376] in the Land of Souls. For these dance without ceasing at their arrival, and are always in a continual movement, whilst she would enjoy a perpetual repose, and a happy tranquillity.

I should never finish if I wished to report to you here all the traits of superstition in these barbarians. That which I have said thereon is enough to make you see the extent of the error and the simplicity of this blind people, who have lived in the shades of Christianity without law, without faith, and without religion.

[377] CHAPTER XIV

*On the Rulers and the Laws of the Gaspesians*

IT is certain that laws have been the foundation of the most flourishing monarchies of the world. This is why they are called, and rightly, the soul of the republics, of the kingdoms, and of the empires of the universe, because these survive only in proportion as their peoples faithfully obey their laws. Consequently one cannot, it seems to me, give to-day a more convincing reason for the decadence of the Gaspesian nation, formerly one of the most numerous and most flourishing of Canada, than their disregard [378] for the fundamental laws which the elders had established, but which our Indians have not observed, and still do not observe at present, except in so far as it pleases them ; for it is truth to say that they have neither faith, nor king, nor laws. One sees no more among these people those large assemblies in the form of councils, nor that supreme authority of the heads of families, elders, and chiefs, who regulated civil and criminal affairs, and in the last resort decided upon war and upon peace, giving such orders as they thought absolutely essential, and enforcing the observance thereof with much submission and fidelity. There are now only two or three Indians who, in their own districts [379] still preserve, though feebly, a sort of power and authority, if one can say that such is found among these peoples. The most prominent chief is followed by several young warriors and by several hunters, who act always as his escort, and who fall in under arms when this ruler wishes particular distinction upon some special occasion. But, in fact,

all his power and authority are based only upon the good will of those of his nation, who execute his orders just in so far as it pleases them.[1] We had among us, at the River of Saint Joseph,[2] one of these old chiefs whom our Gaspesians considered as their head and their ruler, much more because of his family, [380] which was very numerous, than because of his sovereign power, of which they have shaken off the yoke, and which they are not willing any longer to recognise.

The occupation of this chief was to assign the places for hunting, and to take the furs of the Indians, giving them in return whatever they needed. This man made it a point of honour to be always the worst dressed of his people, and to take care that they all were better clothed than he. He held it as a maxim, as he told me one day, that a ruler, and a great heart like his, ought to take more care for others than for himself, because, good hunter as he was, he always obtained easily everything which he needed [381] for his own use, and that as for the rest, if he did not himself live well, he should find his desire in the affection and the hearts of his subjects. It was as if he had wished to say that his treasures and riches were in the hearts and in the affection of his people.[3]

It happened that a stranger wished to dispute his right of command, or at least to share with this ruler that government,

[1] A very similar case (if indeed this is not simply an echo thereof) of an Indian chief at Richibucto who required his warriors to act as his escort on special occasions, is recorded at some length by Denys (*Description*, I. 176).

[2] The Restigouche, as our author tells us at page 494 of his book, and as Father Jumeau's map shows. No doubt the name was given by Father le Clercq, but it did not survive.

[3] Another striking case of this spirit of *noblesse oblige* among Indian chiefs is related by Father Joseph le Caron in 1618, speaking of a Montagnais chief (*First Establishment of the Faith*, I. 136). On this chief's complaint that the French charged the Indians too much for goods, the factor said they would be sold cheaper to him but not to his people. "This Indian then began to say to this factor in a disdainful way: 'You make fun of me to say that you will sell cheap to me and dear to my people. If I did so I should deserve to be hung and beheaded by my people. I am a chief; I do not speak for myself; I speak for my people.' This I witnessed."

with its imaginary grandeur, for which he had as much regard as if it were the greatest empire of the world. This competitor arrived well provided with axes, with guns, with blankets, with beavers, and with everything which could give him some prominence and some entrance into the sovereignty which he [382] claimed was properly due him by right of hereditary succession, because his father had been formerly head and chief of the Gaspesian nation. "Very well," said our Indian, "show that thy heart is a true chief's heart and worthy of absolute empire over the people whom I rule. There," continued he, "are some poor Indians who are wholly naked; give them thy robes of otter and beaver. Thou seest, again, that I am the worst dressed of all, and it is through this that I wish to appear chief—through despoiling and depriving myself of everything in order to aid my Indians. Therefore, when following my example, thou shouldst be as poor as I. Let us go a-hunting when the time is right, [383] and the one of us who kills the most moose and beavers shall be the legitimate king of all the Gaspesians." The stranger accepted this challenge with spirit. In imitation of our chief, he gave away everything he had, and kept back nothing except the bare necessaries. He went hunting, but he was so unfortunate as to do it very badly, and consequently he was obliged to abandon the enterprise which he had formed of commanding our Gaspesians, who did not wish to recognise any other head than their old and brave chief whom they obeyed with pleasure.

The Gaspesians have at present no fundamental laws which serve them as regulations. They make up and end all [384] their quarrels and their differences through friends and through arbiters. If it is, however, a question of punishing a criminal who has killed or assassinated some Indian, he is condemned to death without other form of law. "Take care, my friend," say they, "if thou killest, thou shalt be killed." This is often carried out by command of

the elders, who assemble in council upon the subject, and often by the private authority of individuals, without any trial of the case being made, provided that it is evident the criminal has deserved death.[1]

Neither prisons, racks, wheels, nor gibbets are in use among these people, as in Europe. All are satisfied if the head of the guilty person is broken with a blow of an axe [385] or a club. The other tortures are kept solely for tormenting and killing prisoners of war.

It is the right of the head of the nation, according to the customs of the country, which serve as laws and regulations to the Gaspesians, to distribute the places of hunting to each individual. It is not permitted to any Indian to overstep the bounds and limits of the region which shall have been assigned him in the assemblies of the elders. These are held in autumn and spring expressly to make this assignment.

The young people must strictly obey the orders of the chiefs. When it is a question of going to war, they must allow themselves to be led, and must [386] attack and fight the nation which they wish to destroy, in the manner which has been planned by the head of their council of war.

It is not permissible for any Indian to marry his relative. One never sees among our Gaspesians those incestuous

[1] A curious case, probably, however, apocryphal, of an execution of one of their number by the Micmacs within historic times, is thus related by Robert Cooney, in his *Compendious History of Northern New Brunswick*, &c., 1832, page 138. "A few years after these affairs, [hence about 1730] the Richibuctos condemned one of their tribe, convicted of some treasonable correspondence with the Mohawks, to be stoned to death. After a regular and formal trial, the criminal was conveyed with a great deal of solemnity, from Snider's Point, at the entrance of the harbour, [Richibucto] to Platt's Point, about three miles further up, and there, being previously bound hand and foot, and fastened upon a rock, still visible at low water, was the sentence executed." There is an independent reference to the same subject in John West's *Journal of a Mission to the Indians of the British Provinces of New Brunswick, &c.*, London, 1827, page 253. Speaking of the way in which the Micmacs punished an adulteress, he says, "The crime . . . was seldom known among them . . . It was said that they formerly stoned the offender to death."

marriages of father with daughter, of son with mother, of sister with brother, of uncle with niece, nor even of cousin with cousin. Incest is held in horror among them, and they have always testified to much aversion for this crime.

The one of our Indians who wishes to marry a girl must live an entire year in the wigwam of his mistress's father, whom he must serve and to whom he must give all the [387] furs of moose and beavers which he kills in hunting. By the same law it is forbidden to the future husband and wife to abandon themselves to their pleasure.[1]

After the death of one's brother, it is permissible to marry his wife, in order that she may have children of the same blood if she has not had any by her first husband.

If, when the father of a family is dead, the widow contracts a second marriage, it is necessary that the eldest son take the care of his brothers and sisters, and that he build a separate wigwam. This is for the purpose of avoiding bad treatment by their step-father, and in order not to cause any trouble in the housekeeping.

It is the duty of the head man and chief to have care over the orphans. The chiefs are obliged to [388] distribute them among the wigwams of the best hunters, in order that they may be supported and brought up as if they were the own children of the latter.[2]

All the Gaspesians must without fail aid the sick; and those who have meat or fish in abundance must give some of it to those who are in need.

It is a crime among our Indians not to be hospitable. They receive all strangers who are not their enemies very kindly into their wigwams.

They must take great care of the bones of the dead, and must bury everything which was in use by the deceased, in

[1] This subject of marriage is treated by our author at length in Chapter XVI. (beginning at page 437) of his book, where he makes again these statements.

[2] Our author refers again to this matter at page 111 of his book.

order that the spirits of each thing, such as his snowshoes, guns, axes, [389] kettles, &c., may render him service in the Land of Souls.[1]

According to the Gaspesian laws, it is allowable to break marriages and declare them void when those who are married have no longer any affection for one another.[2]

It is considered shameful to show anger or impatience for the insults that are offered, or the misfortunes which come, to the Indians, at least unless this is to defend the honour and reputation of the dead, who cannot, say they, avenge themselves, nor obtain satisfaction for the insults and affronts which are done them.

It is forbidden them by the laws and customs of the country to pardon or to forgive any one of their enemies, [390] unless great presents are given on behalf of these to the whole nation, or to those who have been injured.

The women have no command among the Indians. They must needs obey the orders of their husbands. They have no rights in the councils, nor in the public feasts. It is the same, as to this, with the young men who have not yet killed any moose, the death of which opens the portal to the honours of the Gaspesian nation, and gives to the young men the right to assist at public and private assemblies. One is always a young man, that is to say, one has no more rights than the children, the women, and the girls, as long as he has not killed a moose. In [391] brief, it can also be said that all the superstitions which we have considered[3] pass for so many laws among these peoples. They have also many others of them, of which I do not speak here, but which shall be seen in the body of this history.

[1] This subject is more fully treated by our author earlier, in Chapter XII., beginning at page 308.

[2] This matter is treated by our author more fully in Chapter XVI., beginning at page 437.

[3] *i.e.* those considered in the preceding chapter, which is devoted to them.

## CHAPTER XV

### *On the Customs of the Gaspesians*[1]

IN the preceding chapters we have spoken of the origin and birth of the Gaspesians. We have told how they were clothed, lodged, and fed; what were the language, religion, superstitions, head men, rulers, and [392] laws of these peoples. It is right, now, in order to satisfy fully the curiosity of the reader, to present to him here a faithful picture of their customs in general, and a synopsis of the good and bad qualities, whether of body or of mind, of the Gaspesians.

They are all naturally well built in body, of a fine size, tall, well-proportioned, and without any deformity, powerful, robust, dexterous, and of surprising agility, especially when they pursue the moose, whose swiftness is not less than that of fallow deer and stags. The men are taller than the women, who are nearly always short; but both are of a deportment grave, serious, and very modest.

[393] They walk with dignity as if they had always some great affair to think upon, and to decide, in their minds.[2]

[1] In this chapter, as in some others of this book, there are many passages so closely like the corresponding parts of Father le Jeune's *Relation* of 1634 as to make it quite certain that our author used that work in writing this book. I have considered the subject in the Introduction to the present volume (page 18).

[2] Our author's statement as to the dignified bearing of the Micmac Indians is amply confirmed by much independent testimony relating both to them and to the neighbouring tribes. Champlain said of the chief Marchin of Kennebec: "He had a fine appearance; all his motions were dignified, savage as he was" (*Œuvres*, Laverdière's edition, 222). Father le Jeune said of certain Montagnais, "this family has something inexpressibly noble

Their colour is brown, tawny, and swarthy, but their teeth are extremely white, perhaps because of the fir gum which they chew very often and which communicates to them this whiteness. Their colour, however, does not lessen at all the natural beauty of the features of their faces, and it can be said with truth that there are seen in Gaspesia as fine children, and persons as well built, as in France; whilst among them there are as a rule neither humpbacks nor crippled, one-eyed, blind, or maimed persons.

They enjoy a perfect health, not being subject to an [394] infinity of diseases as we are. They are neither too stout nor too thin, and one does not see among the Gaspesians any of those fat bellies full of humours and of grease. Consequently the very names of gout, stone, gravel, gall, colic, rheumatism, are entirely unknown to them.

They all have naturally a sound mind, and common sense beyond that which is supposed in France. They conduct their affairs cleverly,[1] and take wise and necessary steps to make them turn out favourably. They are very eloquent and persuasive among those of their own nation, using metaphors

about it," and again, "their demeanour and gait were full of dignity and real grace" (*Jesuit Relations*, Thwaites' edition, V. 145, XV. 229; compare also V. 205, and XLVIII. 171). The matter-of-fact John Allan, leader of the sympathisers with the Revolution on the River Saint John in 1777, said of Ambroise St. Aubin, a chief of that river, "there was something in his demeanour august and noble" (Kidder's *Military Operations in Eastern Maine and Nova Scotia during the Revolution*, Albany, 1867, 105). And almost in our own time Governor Gordon speaks thus of a Micmac who, at the village of Burnt Church, interpreted the address of the Bishop: "He never faltered or hesitated, always rendering with the most perfect fluency the sentence which the Bishop had uttered, whilst his gestures—sometimes folding both hands on his breast, sometimes raising one arm, sometimes gently extending both—were not only forcible but excessively graceful" (*Wilderness Journeys in New Brunswick*, St. John, 1864, 39). And I can add that I have myself known both Micmac and Maliseet Indians whose demeanour bore ample testimony to the truth of these characterisations.

[1] Indeed they were able to outwit the French captains in trade, as Denys makes very plain (*Description*, II. 477, 478). Father Biard also speaks of the same ability (*Jesuit Relations*, Thwaites' edition, III. 81).

and very pleasing circumlocutions in their speeches, which are very eloquent, especially when [395] these are pronounced in the councils and the public and general assemblies.

If it is a great good to be delivered from a great ill, our Gaspesians can call themselves happy, because they have neither avarice nor ambition,—those two cruel executioners which give pain and torture to a multitude of persons. As they have neither police, nor taxes, nor office, nor commandment which is absolute (for they obey, as we have said, only their head men and their chiefs in so far as it pleases them), they scarcely give themselves the trouble to amass riches, or to make a fortune more considerable than that which they possess in their woods. They are content enough provided that they [396] have the wherewithal for living, and that they have the reputation of being good warriors and good hunters, in which they reckon all their glory and their ambition. They are naturally fond of their repose, putting away from them, as far as they can, all the subjects for annoyance which would trouble them. Hence it comes about that they never contradict any one, and that they let every one do as he pleases, even to the extent that the fathers and the mothers do not dare correct their children, but permit their misbehaviour for fear of vexing them by chastising them.

They never quarrel and never are angry with one another, not because of any inclination they have to practise virtue, but for their own satisfaction, [397] and in the fear, as we have just said, of troubling their repose, of which they are wholly idolaters.[1]

Indeed, if any natural antipathy exists between husband and wife, or if they cannot live together in perfect understanding, they separate from one another, in order to seek elsewhere the peace and union which they cannot find

[1] Their love for repose is exemplified very clearly by the high place they give it among the desirable attributes of the Land of Souls, as our author incidentally illustrates at pages 228 and 376 of his book.

together. Consequently they cannot understand how one can submit to the indissolubility of marriage. "Dost thou not see," they will say to you, "that thou hast no sense? My wife does not get on with me, and I do not get on with her. She will agree well with such a one, who does not agree with his own wife. Why dost thou wish that we [398] four be unhappy for the rest of our days?" In a word, they hold it as a maxim that each one is free: that one can do whatever he wishes: and that it is not sensible to put constraint upon men. It is necessary, say they, to live without annoyance and disquiet, to be content with that which one has, and to endure with constancy the misfortunes of nature, because the sun, or he who has made and governs all, orders it thus. If some one among them laments, grieves, or is angry, this is the only reasoning with which they console him. "Tell me, my brother, wilt thou always weep? Wilt thou always be angry? Wilt thou come nevermore to the dances and the feasts of the Gaspesians? Wilt thou die, indeed, in weeping and [399] in the anger in which thou art at present?" If he who laments and grieves answers him no, and says that after some days he will recover his good humour and his usual amiability,—"Well, my brother," will be said to him, "thou hast no sense; since thou hast no intention to weep nor to be angry always, why dost thou not commence immediately to banish all bitterness from thy heart, and rejoice thyself with thy fellow-countrymen?" This is enough to restore his usual repose and tranquillity to the most afflicted of our Gaspesians. In a word, they rely upon liking nothing, and upon not becoming attached to the goods of the earth, in order not to be grieved or sad when they lose them. They are, [400] as a rule, always joyous, without being uneasy as to who will pay their debts.

They have the fortitude and the resolution to bear bravely the misfortunes which are usual and common to all men. This greatness of spirit shows grandly in the fatigues of war,

hunting, and the fishery, in which they endure the roughest labours with an admirable constancy. They have patience enough in their sicknesses to put Christians to confusion. In case there is shouting, blustering, singing, and dancing in the wigwam, it is very rarely that the sick one complains. He is content with that which he is given, and takes without repugnance whatever is presented to him, for the purpose of [401] restoring him to his original health. Also they endure with patience the severest punishments when they are convinced that they have deserved them, and that one has reason to be angry against them. They even make considerable presents to those who punish them severely for their misbehaviour, in order, say they, to remove from the hearts of the former all the bitterness caused by the crime of which they are guilty. They always allege, as their usual excuse, that they had no sense when they had committed such and such actions. When they are convinced at length of their fault, one may threaten to break their bones with blows of clubs, to pierce their bodies with swords, or to break their heads with guns, and they present themselves to [402] submit to these punishments. "Strike me," say they, "and kill me if thou wilt; thou art right to be angry, and as for me I am wrong to have offended thee." [1]

It is not the same, however, when they are ill-treated without cause, for then everything is to be feared from them. As they are very vindictive against strangers, they preserve resentment for the ill-treatment in their hearts until they are entirely avenged for the injury or for the affront which will have been wrongly done them. They will even make themselves drunk on purpose, or they will pretend to be full with brandy, in order to carry out their wicked plan, imagining that they will always be amply justified in the crime which

[1] Compare an incidental confirmation of this spirit and speech related by our author at page 317 of his book. The spirit is also confirmed by Diéreville in his *Relation du Voyage du Port Royal* (Amsterdam, 1710), 171.

they have committed [403] if they but say to the elders and heads of the nation, that they were tipsy, and that they had no reason or judgment during their drunkenness.

They do not know what it is, as a rule, to give up an enterprise which they once have formed, especially if it is public and known to their fellow-countrymen ; for they fear to incur the reproach that would be made to them that they did not have heart enough to carry out the design.

They are so generous and liberal towards one another that they seem not to have any attachment to the little they possess, for they deprive themselves thereof very willingly and in very good spirit the very moment when they know that their friends have [404] need of it. It is true that this generous disposition is undergoing some alteration since the French, through the commerce which they have with them, have gradually accustómed them to traffic and not to give anything for nothing ; for, prior to the time when trade came into use among these people, it was as in the Golden Age, and everything was common property among them.

Hospitality is in such great esteem among our Gaspesians that they make almost no distinction between the home-born and the stranger. They give lodging equally to the French and to the Indians who come from a distance, and to both they distribute generously whatever they have obtained in hunting and in the fishery, giving themselves little concern if the strangers remain among [405] them weeks, months, and even entire years. They are always good-natured to their guests, whom, for the time, they consider as belonging to the wigwam, especially if they understand even a little of the Gaspesian tongue. You will see them supporting their relatives, the children of their friends, the widows, orphans, and old people, without ever expressing any reproach for the support or the other aid which they give them. It is surely necessary to admit that this is a true indication of a good heart and a generous soul. Consequently it is truth to say

that the injury most felt among them is the reproach that an Indian is Medousaoüek,[1] that is to say, that he [406] is stingy. This is why, when one refuses them anything, they say scornfully: "Thou art a mean one," or else, "Thou likest that; like it then as much as thou wishest, but thou wilt always be stingy and a man without heart."

They are nevertheless ungrateful towards the French, and they do not, as a rule, give anything for nothing. Their ingratitude reaches even to a point that, after having been supported and provided with the necessaries of life in their needs and their necessities, they will demand of you a compensation for the least service they will render you.[2]

They are fond of ceremony, and are anxious to be accorded some when they come to trade at the French establishments; [407] and it is, consequently, in order to satisfy them that sometimes the guns, and even the cannon, are fired on their arrival. The leader himself assembles all the canoes near his own and ranges them in good order before landing, in order to await the salute which is given him, and which all the Indians return to the French by the discharge of their guns. Sometimes the leader and chiefs are invited for a meal in order to show to all the Indians of the nation that they are esteemed and honoured. Rather frequently they are even given something like a fine coat, in order to distinguish them from the commonalty. For such things as this they have a particular esteem, especially if the article has been in use by the commander of the French. [408] It was, perhaps,

[1] This word is obviously Micmac, and is evidently identical with the word given by Rand in his *English-Micmac Dictionary* (page 253) for "stingy," namely, *Mĕdoojâwāe*. Since, aside from the additional *k* of our author's form, the two words differ practically only in one letter, I infer that the *s* of Father le Clercq's form is a misprint for *j*.

[2] An example of a closely related trait, the demanding of a great reward as a condition of helping the French in distress, is given by our author from his personal experience at page 230 of his book.

for this reason that a good old man who loved me tenderly was never willing to appear in any ceremony, whether public or private, except with a cap, a pair of embroidered gloves, and a rosary which I had given him. He held my present in so much esteem that he believed himself something more grand than he was, although he was then all that he could be among his people, of which he was still the head man and the chief at the age of more than a hundred and fifteen years.[1] This good man gloried in the fact, and boasted everywhere, that he was my brother, and said that we were so closely bound together in friendship that his heart and mine were one and the same thing. The affair went even to this extent [409] that he wished to accompany me everywhere I went, perhaps as much to profit by whatever was given me among the French as to gratify his friendship.

The Gaspesians, however, are so sensitive to affronts which are offered them that they sometimes abandon themselves to despair, and even make attempts upon their lives, in the belief that the insult which has been done them tarnishes the honour and the reputation which they have acquired, whether in war or in hunting.

Such were the feelings of a young Indian who, on account of having received by inadvertence a blow from a broom, given by a servant who was sweeping the house, imagined that he ought not to survive this imaginary insult [410] which waxed greater in his imagination in proportion as he reflected upon it. "What," said he to himself, "to have been turned out in a manner so shameful, and in presence of so great a number of Indians, my fellow-countrymen, and after that to appear again before their eyes? Ah, I prefer to die! What shall I look like, in the future, when I find myself in the public assemblies of my nation? And what esteem will there be for my courage and my valour when there is a question of

[1] On the probable exaggeration of their age by the Indians, consult an earlier note under page 230 of this volume.

going to war, after having been beaten and chased in confusion by a maid-servant from the establishment of the captain of the French. It were much better, once more, that I die." In fact he entered into the woods singing certain mournful songs [411] which expressed the bitterness of his heart. He took and tied to a tree the strap which served him as girdle, and began to hang and to strangle himself in earnest. He soon lost consciousness, and he would even infallibly have lost his life if his own sister had not happened to come by chance, but by special good fortune, to the very place where her miserable brother was hanging. She cut the strap promptly, and after having lamented as dead this man in whom she could not see any sign of life, she came to announce this sad news to the Indians who were with Monsieur Denys.[1] They went into the woods and brought to the habitation this unhappy Gaspesian, who was still breathing [412] though but little. I forced open his teeth, and, having made him swallow some spoonfuls of brandy, he came to himself, and a little later he recovered his original health.

His brother had formerly hung and strangled himself completely, in the Bay of Gaspé, because he was refused by a girl whom he loved tenderly, and whom he sought in marriage. For, in fact, although our Gaspesians, as we have said, live joyously and contentedly, and although they sedulously put off, so far as they can, everything which can trouble them, nevertheless some among them fall occasionally into a melancholy so black and so profound that they become immersed wholly in a cruel despair, and even make attempts [413] upon their own lives.

The women and the girls are no more exempt than the men from this frenzy, and, abandoning themselves wholly to

[1] This incident evidently occurred at Petite Rivière (Barachois), since the Monsieur Denys of our author was Pierre Denys, Sieur de la Ronde, whose habitation was at that place, not Richard Denys of Miramichi, who is always called in this book by his title of Fronsac.

grief and sadness caused either by some displeasure they may have received, or by the recollection of the death of their relatives and friends, they hang and strangle themselves, as formerly did the wives and daughters of the Milesians, whom only the apprehension of being exposed wholly nude in the public places, according to the law that was made expressly for this purpose, kept from committing like cruelties. Nothing, however, has been effective up to the present in checking the mania of our Gaspesian women, of whom a number would miserably end their lives, if, at the time when [414] their melancholy and despair becomes known through the sad and gloomy songs which they sing, and which they make resound through the woods in a wholly dolorous manner, some one did not follow them everywhere in order to prevent and to anticipate the sad effects of their rage and their fury. It is, however, surprising to see that this melancholy and despair become dissipated almost in a moment, and that these people, however afflicted they seem, instantly check their tears, stop their sighs, and recover their usual tranquillity, protesting to all those who accompany them, that they have no more bitterness in their hearts. "*Ndegouche*," say they, "*apche mou, adadaseou, apche mou oüahga-* [415] *hi, apche mou kedoukichtonebilchi*."[1] "There is my melancholy gone by; I assure thee

[1] The Micmac roots and modern equivalent of this sentence are fairly plain. The thrice repeated words *apche mou* are without question *apch*, meaning "again" or "more," and *moo*, meaning "not." *Ndegouche* is evidently closely equivalent to *Nŭgooch*, meaning "now"; *adadaseou* evidently includes the root *ajedasoo*, found in the Micmac words for "grief," "melancholy," and "sorrow," and perhaps is misprinted from *ajadaseou; oüahgahi* evidently includes the root *akayĕ* in words for "lament" and "weep" (compare *akahie* of page 148); *kedoukichtonebilchi* evidently includes *kedoo*, an inseparable prefix meaning "I am about to," and the equivalent of *kĕstoonāpilse*, meaning "to choke." The entire expression could therefore be literally expressed, so far as its roots are concerned, "Now! again no melancholy, again no lamenting, again no intention to hang." But this ignores, of course, all the participles, &c., upon which so much of the exact shade of meaning depends. All of the above roots are from Rand's Dictionaries, where they may readily be found under their respective headings.

that I shall lament no more, and that I have lost any intention to hang and strangle myself."

They are sweet tempered, peaceable, and tractable, having much charity, affection, and tenderness for one another : good to their friends, but cruel and pitiless to their enemies : wanderers and vagabonds, but industrious, nevertheless, and very clever in all that they undertake, even to making the stocks of guns as well as it can be done in France. I have seen some of them who have made locks from wood, and keys of the same material, upon the model of the one serving to close our casket in which were kept the ornaments [416] of the Chapel that were used by me.

It can be said, to the praise and the glory of our Gaspesian women, that they are very modest, chaste, and continent, beyond what could be supposed ; and I can say with truth that I have specially devoted myself to the mission of Gaspesia because of the natural inclination the Gaspesians have for virtue. One never hears in their wigwams any impure words, not even any of those conversations which have a double meaning. Never do they in public take any liberty—I do not say criminal alone, but even the most trifling ; no kissing, no badinage between young persons of different [417] sexes ; in a word, everything is said and is done in their wigwams with much modesty and reserve.[1]

There are among our Indian women none of those who, as in the case of the girls of some nations of this new world, take pride in prostituting themselves to the first comer, and whom their fathers and mothers themselves present to the

[1] Our author's testimony as to the modesty and chastity of the Micmacs is substantiated, well-nigh unanimously, by all of our early writers who knew them. Thus, it is emphasised by Lescarbot (*Histoire*, 738, 740), by Father Biard (*Relations*, Thwaites' edition, II. 9; III. 103), by Father le Jeune (*op. cit.*, VIII. 157, 165-167), by Denys (*Description*, II. 374, 393), by Monseigneur de Saint Valier (*Estat present*, pages 43-47), by Diéreville (*Voyage*, 168), and by l'Abbé Maillard (*Customs*, 55), though the latter intermingles some details belonging to the Canadian tribes, while more recently it has been emphasised by Montague Chamberlain for all the Abenaki tribes (*Acadiensis*, II. 81).

most famous and prominent hunters and warriors. All of these shameful prostitutions are held in horror and abomination among our Gaspesians, and one sees without wonder young Indian women so chaste and modest as to serve as an example, and to teach those of their sex the love and esteem which they ought to have for modesty and chastity. [418] I have seen one of them, who, being solicited strongly to submit to the pursuit and the importunities of a young warrior, whom she could not love without the loss of her honour, which was as dear to her as life, and who, wishing to escape his insolent pursuit, fled from the wigwam of her father and betook herself more than fifty leagues away, travelling with one of her companions upon the ice and in the snow, where she preferred to pass the nights in mid-winter upon some branches of fir, rather than to expose herself to committing a crime which she detested infinitely in her heart. The young Indian sought her in vain in the company of the other Indian women, who, not being able to imagine what had become [419] of their companion, feared lest she had fallen over some precipice, or had made an attempt on her life in the displeasure and the annoyance which she felt in seeing herself persecuted by the brutality of her lover. All the Indians, however, were agreeably surprised when this girl appeared some time after in the wigwam of her father, to whom she gave an account of the matter and of the cause of her absence.

I do not claim, however, to affirm that chastity has an absolute empire in all the hearts of our Gaspesian women, for one does see among them some girls and women who are libertines and who live in dishonour. But indeed it is a fact that the drinking of brandy [420] and drunkenness causes these lapses, in accordance with the proverb, *In vino Venus.* For those who do not drink are so jealous of their honour that not only do they not abandon themselves to evil, but, on the contrary, they even go so far as to defeat and

put to confusion, by their strong and brave resistance, those who have the insolence and temerity to solicit them to the least criminal action which can turn them from their duty.

They are naturally fickle, mockers, slanderers, and dissimulators. They are not true to their promises except in so far as they are restrained either by fear or by hope ; and they believe any person would have no sense who would keep [421] his word against his own interest.

Their swearing is like that of the Romans. They swear by the sun, which they have worshipped as their deity, by their children, by their fathers, and by everything which they esteem most dear and most important, as did the Romans, who swore formerly by Jupiter, by Cæsar, and by the immortal Gods. It is true that our Gaspesians sometimes place the fingers in form of a cross in invoking the sacred name of JESUS, when they swear about some matter of the utmost consequence. There are even some of them who swear and blaspheme the holy name of God, like the French, who serve as stumbling-blocks to these peoples by their bad example [422] in the execrable blasphemies which they launch against Him whom the angels adore in Heaven, and whom the demons revere in the abysses of Hell.

Never can there apply better than to our Gaspesians the couplet *Rustico progenies nescit habere modum*,[1] because in fact they do not know what civility is, nor decorum. Since they consider themselves all equal, and one as great, as powerful, and as rich as another, they mock openly at our bowings, at our compliments, and at our embracings. They never remove their hats when they enter our dwellings ; this ceremony seems to them too troublesome. They throw their presents on

[1] That is to say in our tongue,—"An unpolished race knows nothing of the practice of self-restraint." This is obviously a quotation from one of the poets, but Professor W. T. Raymond, to whom I owe the translation, has sought its source in vain.

[423] the ground at the foot of the one to whom they wish to give them, and they smoke a pipe of tobacco before speaking. "Listen!" say they, "Take the present which I give thee with all my heart." That is the sole compliment which they make on this occasion; but, nevertheless, all is affability among them, for everything which gives contentment to the senses passes for virtue.

They are filthy and vile in their wigwams, of which the approaches are filled with excrements, feathers, chips, shreds of skins, and very often with entrails of the animals or the fishes which they take in hunting or fishing. In their eating they wash their meat only very superficially before putting it upon the fire, and they never clean [424] the kettle except the first time that they use it. Their clothes are all filthy, both outside and inside, and soaked with oil and grease, of which the stink often produces sickness of the stomach. They hunt for vermin before everybody, without turning aside even a little. They make it walk for fun upon their hands, and they eat it as if it were something good. They find the use of our handkerchiefs ridiculous; they mock at us and say that it is placing excrements in our pockets. Finally, however calm it may be outside of the wigwam, there always prevails inside a very inconvenient wind, since these Indians let it go very freely, especially [425] when they have eaten much moose, of which one can say *Corruptio optimi pessima*.

Their opposition to Christianity is great, from the side of their indifference, insensibility, and other faults which we have noted. But it is also no less from the point of view of drunkenness, which is the predominant vice of our Gaspesians; and I can even say with truth, that this is one of the most powerful obstacles to the conversion of these peoples.

These barbarians, who formerly mistook wine for blood,[1]

[1] As our author states, in another connection, at page 90 of his book.

and brandy for poison, and who fled with horror from the French who would give them these liquors, are to-day so enamoured with these kinds of drinks that they [426] make it a principle of honour to gorge themselves therewith like beasts ; and they only drink, properly speaking, in order to get drunk. It is this which compels the missionaries to regard with grief the immoderate traffic in brandy in Canada, and to view it as the most pernicious of the obstacles which the Devil has been able to raise against the salvation of the Indians,[1] and against the establishment of the faith among these pagan and barbarous nations. For all the vices and the crimes, which are usually found separate from one another, are united in the single trade in brandy when it is made without regulations and moderation.

Avarice, self-seeking, and the immoderate desire to amass riches, all of which the Son of God has [427] condemned by the choice which He has made of evangelical poverty, is the unhappily fertile source of the surprising disorders which are committed by those who trade and traffic in brandy with the Indians. For you will note, if you please, that the traders make them drunk quite on purpose, in order to deprive these poor barbarians of the use of reason, so that the traders can deceive them more easily, and obtain almost for nothing their furs, which they would not sell except for a just and reasonable price if they were in their right minds. This trade is fraudulent, and liable to restitution in proportion to what the thing is worth, according to the customs of trade, these barbarians not having in their drunkenness the liberty [428] nor the judgment which is necessary for concluding a deed of sale or purchase, which requires a free and mutual consent from both parties.

Although it is not allowable to sell water for wine or for brandy, yet this is very often done by the mixing of these liquors

[1] These words are *des François* in the original, though surely our author meant to write *des Sauvages*.

in the sale and distribution of these kinds of drinks. This is therefore the second irregularity of which our traders in brandy are guilty ; and they colour this injustice by the title of charity, alleging as their reason, that they make this mixture in order not to get the Indians drunk. It is true that the traders would be to some extent excusable if they made up the difference by other goods, but it is well known that they do [429] nothing of the kind. On the contrary, they take the same profit as if they sold honestly, and they still make the Indians drunk by these mixed liquors, thus rendering themselves, by this miserable kind of trading, the masters not only of the furs of the Indians, but also of their blankets, guns, axes, kettles, &c., which the traders have sold them at a very dear rate. Thus these poor barbarians find themselves wholly naked, and deprived of the furs and goods which they had brought and traded for their own use, and for the support of their families.

Lewdness, adulteries, incests, and several other crimes which decency keeps me from naming, are the usual disorders which are [430] committed through the trade in brandy, of which some traders make use in order to abuse the Indian women, who yield themselves readily during their drunkenness to all kinds of indecency, although at other times, as we have said, they would be more like to give a box on the ears than a kiss to whomsoever wished to engage them to evil, if they were in their right minds.

Injuries, quarrels, homicides, murders, parricides are to this day the sad consequences of the trade in brandy ; and one sees with grief Indians dying in their drunkenness : strangling themselves : the brother cutting the throat of the sister : the husband breaking the head of his wife : a mother [431] throwing her child into the fire or the river : and fathers cruelly choking little innocent children whom they cherish and love as much as, and more than, themselves when they are not deprived of their reason. They consider it sport to

break and shatter everything in the wigwams, and to bawl for hours together, repeating always the same word. They beat themselves and tear themselves to pieces, something which happens never, or at least very rarely, when they are sober. The French themselves are not exempt from the drunken fury of these barbarians, who, through a manifestation of the anger of God justly irritated against a conduct so little Christian, sometimes rob, ravage, and burn the French houses and [432] stores, and very often descend to the saddest extremes.

I abbreviate an infinity of other disturbances resulting from the immoderate trade which is made to our Indians in wine, brandy, and all other intoxicating drinks, in order that I may justify the zeal of Monseigneur the Bishop of Quebec, the Recollects, and the other missionaries who have strongly declared themselves against these disturbances, and with so much more of justice since, through long experience, they have recognised the sad cause of the loss of the spiritual and temporal good of the French and of the Indians of New France. They have recognised, too, that among a great number of obstacles—from superstition, from insensibility, from blindness, [433] from indifference, from impurity—which are opposed to the conversion of these pagan nations, there will always be much less likelihood of establishing solidly a true Christianity among these peoples so long as they are made drunk, and so long as no rule or moderation is observed in the distribution and sale of brandy. It was also this, perhaps, which a young libertine wished to express to me. He, not giving himself any concern about the salvation of the Indians, provided that he had their furs in order to satisfy his ambition and selfishness, boasted that he could do more evil with a bottle of brandy than the missionaries could do good with a [434] bottle of holy water ; that is to say, that he could damn more Indians by making them

drunk, than the missionaries could save by instructing them in the truths of Christianity.[1]

I do not wish to stop here to consider the arguments which the traders advance to justify the injustice of their proceedings. They say that it would be necessary to close the public-houses in France : that it is not a sin to make a Frenchman drunk, still less an Indian, even when he has been induced to drink, and although it is known that they take brandy only in order to become drunk, these barbarians not finding pleasure in this drink except so far as it makes them entirely lose their understanding and reason : that it would ruin absolutely the [435] commerce and trade of the colony if brandy were not given to the Indians, because these barbarians would betake themselves to the English and the Hollanders of New England and New Holland : and that, finally, there was needed a regulation of police, and above all no favouritism of persons, neither of relatives nor friends, so that the trade should be free to everybody to use it with moderation. This is in order that the profit should not be, as it was formerly, in the hands of those to whom the trade had been granted exclusively of all others, under the pretext, it was said, that they would not make the Indians drunk, but among whom, nevertheless, were seen many disturbances [436] and irregularities.

It would be very easy to answer all this reasoning, but since the greater part of the arguments destroy one another, I will only say this ; it is desirable that a regulation of police be made to check, under rigorous penalties, the disturbances caused by this unfortunate liquor : that the trade be free, without distinction of persons, in order to avoid all jealousy : and finally, that each one be willing to relax something of his

[1] All of the early missionaries were unanimous both as to the vast evil attending the sale of brandy to the Indians, and also in their denunciation of this traffic. And their observations and views were shared by at least one prominent layman, for Denys gives an account of the subject very like our author's (*Description*, II. 465–483).

selfishness in order to facilitate the conversion of these peoples, and the establishment of Christianity among these barbarians, by settling and civilising them among us. This would be in accordance with the ancient plan of the Reverend Recollect Fathers of the Province of Paris, who have the honour to have [437] been the first Apostles of this new world, as I have demonstrated in the *First Establishment of the Faith in New France*.[1]

[1] Our author's other book, in which the subject is fully treated.

## CHAPTER XVI

### *On the Marriage of the Gaspesians*

THE boys, according to the usual custom of the country, never leave the wigwams of their fathers except to go and live with some of their friends, where they hope to find girls whom they may marry. A boy has no sooner formed the design to espouse a girl than he makes for himself a proposal about it to her father, because he well knows that the girl [438] will never approve the suit, unless it be agreeable to her father. The boy asks the father if he thinks it suitable for him to enter into his wigwam, that is to say, into relationship with him through marrying his daughter, for whom he professes to have much inclination. If the father does not like the suit of the young Indian, he tells him so without other ceremony than saying it cannot be ; and this lover, however enamoured he may be, receives this reply with equanimity as the decisive decree of his fate and of his courtship, and seeks elsewhere some other sweetheart. It is not the same if the father finds that the suitor who presents himself is acceptable for his daughter ; for then, after having given his consent to [439] this lover, he tells him to speak to his sweetheart, in order to learn her wish about an affair which concerns herself alone. For they do not wish, say these barbarians, to force the inclinations of their children in the matter of marriage, or to induce them, whether by use of force, obedience, or affection, to marry men whom they cannot bring themselves to like. Hence it is that the fathers and mothers of our Gaspesians leave to their children the

entire liberty of choosing the person whom they think most adaptable to their dispositions, and most conformable to their affections, although the parents, nevertheless, always keep the right to indicate to them the one whom they think most likely to be most suitable for them. But [440] in the end this matter turns out only as those wish who are to be married; and they can very well say that they do not marry for the sake of others, but for themselves alone.

The boy, then, after obtaining the consent of the father, addresses himself to the girl, in order to ascertain her sentiments. He makes her a present from whatever important things he possesses; and the custom is such that if she is agreeable to his suit, she receives and accepts it with pleasure, and offers him in return some of her most beautiful workmanship. She takes care, say they, not to receive the least thing from those who seek her in marriage, in order not to contract any engagement with a young man whom she has not the intention of marrying.

[441] The presents having been received and accepted by both parties, the Indian returns to his home, takes leave of his parents, and comes to live for an entire year in the wigwam of his sweetheart's father, whom, according to the laws of the country, he is to serve, and to whom he is to give all the furs which he secures in hunting.[1] It is very much as formerly Jacob did, who served his father-in-law Laban before marrying Rachel. It is necessary then that he show himself a good hunter, capable of supporting a large family: that he make himself pleasant, obedient, and prompt to do everything which is connected with the welfare and the

[1] This statement is also made by our author on page 387 of his book. The period of probation is also mentioned by Denys (*Description*, II. 372), and as well by Lescarbot in his *Histoire* (738), by Diéreville in his *Voyage* (140), and by Gyles in his *Memoirs of Odd Adventures* (Boston, 1736), edition of 1869, 45, though the three latter appear to have considered it a period of marriage but of continence. A similar custom elsewhere is described in the *Seventeenth Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, Part I., page 282.

comfort of the wigwam : and that he be skilled in the usual exercises of the nation ; this he does in order to merit the esteem of his mistress and to make her believe [442] that she will be perfectly happy with him. The girl, for her part, also does her best with that which concerns the housekeeping, and devotes herself wholly, during this year, if the suit of the boy be pleasing to her, to making snowshoes, sewing canoes, preparing barks, dressing skins of moose or of beaver, drawing the sled—in a word, to doing everything which can give her the reputation of being a good housewife.[1]

As they are all equally poor and rich, self-interest never determines their marriages. Also there is never a question of dowry, of property, of inheritance, of a contract, or of a notary who arranges the property of the two parties in case of divorce. If they [443] possess a blanket, or some beaver robe, it is sufficient for setting up housekeeping, and all that even the richest can hope for is a kettle, a gun, a fire-steel, a knife, an axe, a canoe, and some other trifles. These are all the riches of the newly-married couples, who do not fail, nevertheless, to live content when this little is wanting, because they hope to find in hunting that with which to supply in plenty their needs and necessities.

Many persons are persuaded but too easily that the young man abuses his future spouse during this year which he is obliged to spend in the wigwam of his sweetheart. But aside from the fact that it is a [444] custom and an invariable law among our Gaspesians, which it is not permissible to transgress without exposing the entire nation to some considerable evil, it is truth to say that these two lovers live together like brother and sister with much circumspection. I have never heard, during all the time that I have lived

[1] The duties of the women in the household are described much more fully by Denys (*Description*, II. 373, 411); and earlier writers, notably Lescarbot and Father Biard, also give the subject some attention.

in Gaspesia, that any disorder occurred between them, considering likewise that the women and the girls, as we have said, are themselves so modest as not to permit in this matter any liberty which would be contrary to their duty.

When, then, the two parties concur in disposition and tastes, at the end of the year the oldest [445] men of the nation, and the parents and friends of the future married couple, are brought together to the feast which is to be made for the public celebration of their marriage. The young man is obliged to go for the provision, and the entertainment is more or less magnificent according as he makes a hunt or a fishery more or less successful. The usual speeches are made, they sing, they dance, they amuse themselves ; and in the presence of the whole assembly the girl is given to the boy as his wife, without any other ceremony. If it turns out then that the disposition of one is incompatible with the nature of the other, the boy or the girl retires without fuss, and everybody is as content and satisfied as if the marriage had been accomplished, because, say they, one ought not to marry [446] only to be unhappy the remainder of one's days.

There is nevertheless much instability in these sorts of alliances, and the young married folks change their inclinations very easily when several years go by without their having children. "For in fact," say they to their wives, "I have only married thee in the hope of seeing in my wigwam a numerous family, and since I cannot have children with thee, let us separate, and seek elsewhere each his own advantage." It is such that if any stability is found in the marriages of our Gaspesians, it is only when the wife gives to her husband evidence of her fecundity ; and it can be said with truth that the children are [447] then the indissoluble bonds, and the confirmation, of the marriage of their father and mother, who keep faithful company without ever separating, and who live

in so great a union with one another, that they seem not to have more than a single heart and a single will. They[1] are very fond of one another, and they agree remarkably well. You never see quarrels, hatred, or reproaches among them. The men leave the arrangements of the housekeeping to the women, and do not interfere with them. The women cut up, slice off, and give away the meat as they please, but the husband does not get angry ; and I can say that I have never seen the head of the wigwam where I was living ask of his wife what [448] had become of the meat of moose and of beaver, although all that he had laid in had diminished very quickly. No more have I ever heard the women complain because they were not invited to the feasts or the councils : because the men amused themselves and ate the best morsels : because they themselves worked incessantly going to fetch wood for the fires, building the wigwams, dressing the skins, and occupying themselves with other severe labours, which are done only by the women. Each does her little duty quietly, peaceably, and without debate. The multiplication of children does not embarrass them ; the more they have, the more they are content and satisfied.

One cannot express the grief [449] of a Gaspesian when he loses his wife. It is true that outwardly he dissimulates as much as he can the bitterness which he has in his heart, because these people consider it a mark of weakness unworthy of a man, be he ever so little brave and noble, to lament in public. If, then, the husband sometimes sheds tears, it is only to show that he is not insensible to the death of

[1] From this word almost to the end of this paragraph, our author's text, while displaying some variations, agrees closely, and through whole phrases is identical, with a passage in Father le Jeune's *Relation* of 1634 (*Jesuit Relations*, Thwaites' edition, VI. 233). It is perfectly evident that our author here as elsewhere used Father le Jeune's *Relation* as a guide in the preparation of his own narrative, altering it to fit the conditions among the Gaspesians —a subject I have discussed in the Introduction (page 18) to the present volume.

his wife, whom he loved tenderly ; although it can truly be said that in his own privacy he abandons himself entirely to melancholy, which very often kills him, or which takes him to the most distant nations, there to make war and to drown in the blood of his enemies the sorrow and grief which overwhelm him.

[450] CHAPTER XVII

*On the Manner in which the Gaspesians make War*

IF we investigate the motives and the particular causes which have inspired these peoples in going to war, we find nothing other than a desire to avenge an injury they have received, or, more often, the ambition to make themselves feared and dreaded by foreign nations. Hence it comes to pass that the Indians have been seen traversing great extents of country with a few handfuls of Indian corn as their entire provision, sleeping upon the snow, suffering hunger and thirst, exposing themselves to the inclemency of the weather in the [451] most rigorous seasons, lying in wait ten to fifteen days behind some tree—all in order to find opportunity to surprise, fight, and vanquish their enemies, to remove their scalps, and to return to their own country loaded with these cruel spoils. In a word, they do it for the purpose of indicating to the whole nation that they have ample courage to avenge by themselves any insults which may be offered them when the nation is not prepared itself to participate in their resentment.

Neither profit nor the desire to extend the boundaries of their province ever has influence in the council of war ; and they never attack their enemies with the intention of seizing their country or of subjugating them to the laws and the customs of [452] Gaspesia. They are entirely content, provided they are in a position to say " We have conquered " such and such " nations ; we are avenged upon our enemies ; and we have taken from them a multitude of scalps, after

having slaughtered great numbers of them in the heat of combat."

Although our Gaspesians enjoy the delights of peace (and I am speaking here especially of the wars of the ancestors of this nation rather than of those of the present day, who seem to have lost entirely that warlike disposition through which their ancestors formerly conquered and triumphed gloriously over the most numerous peoples of New France), they preserve, nevertheless [453] even yet a remnant of cruelty and of a desire to wage war against the ancient enemies of their nation, and especially against the Indians who live on the north of the mouth of the River of Saint Lawrence, and who dread our Gaspesians as the most terrible and most cruel of their enemies.

We call these barbarians the little Eskimaux,[1] to distinguish them from the great, who live at the Baye des Espagnols, where the Basques go to make their cod fishery. This they do with much peril and danger because of the implacable warfare which they wage with these Indians. The source and origin of this warfare arises from this, that a

[1] This hostility between Micmacs and Esquimaux, which had become traditional, was obviously based upon that same psychological need for an enemy to bluster against, and a foe to avenge imaginary insults upon, which characterises the most enlightened of modern nations. Ample confirmation and considerable extension of our author's statement upon this matter occur in the *Jesuit Relations*. Thus a reference exists to such a war in 1633 (Thwaites' edition, XXX. 133), and in the *Relation* of 1644–45, an account is given of a war party of Micmacs which passed Miscou, and later returned with scalps and prisoners after a foray on the north coast of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence (*op. cit.*, XXVIII. 34, 105). Again, in the *Relation* of 1659–60 it is stated that there had been a similar expedition two years before, and additional details are given (*op. cit.*, XLV. 65). Another expedition of 1661 is very fully described with much interesting detail by Father Richard in the *Relation* of 1661–62 (*op. cit.*, XLVII. 221). But I have not found any actual statement of a descent of the Esquimaux upon Micmac territory.

The distinction our author makes between the *petits Eskimaux* and the *grands* I have not found elsewhere. The *Baye des Espagnols* was a temporary name of the Bay now called Bradore Bay, as I learn from a note by Dr. S. E. Dawson in *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, XI., 1905, ii. 26.

Basque or Spanish sailor [454] having become lost in the woods, without ability to return on board ship before the departure of the vessels whose crews searched and waited for him in vain, found himself obliged to remain in the wigwams of the Indians, whom he fortunately met after suffering many troubles and fatigues. These barbarians did everything they could to console him for his hardships. They even gave him the daughter of the leading one of their chiefs, whom he married, and with whom he lived in peace. This Indian woman had all the affection imaginable for him, especially when she found herself in a condition soon to become the mother of a child, which she passionately desired in order to induce her husband to love her tenderly. [455] The winter passed very pleasantly ; the ships arrived as usual ; and the captain was rejoiced to find his sailor in perfect health, and to learn of the generous way in which the Indians had treated him. He gave a solemn feast of gratitude to all the Eskimaux. This miserable creature was the only one who was insensible to the friendliness he had received from these people ; and not only this, but he even formed the horrible intention of cutting his wife's throat before returning to France. Animated by rage and fury, but concealing, nevertheless, the cruel plan he had formed against her who had saved his life, he made pretence of wishing to go a hunting, in order to entertain [456] the French. For this purpose he keeps away from the ships, he avoids the wigwams, he embarks in a canoe with his wife ; and, having arrived at a place where a pleasing stream runs down between two rocks, he disembarks with her, quarrels with her, throws her upon the ground, kills her, murders her, and to finish his cruelty, he opens her belly with his knife in order to see whether children were conceived and formed in the womb of the Indian women as in the womb of the women of Europe. It seems that Nature reproached him immediately for the horror of his cruelty and the enormity of his outrage, by making him see

the body of a little infant, which formed a silent reproach to him for killing it so cruelly [457] after having given it life.

I do not know whether this unnatural sailor, who embarked after so black and wicked a deed, conceived all the remorse which he ought to have had for it in his heart. But I know well that the Indians were thereby so keenly grieved to the heart that they have wreaked upon the Spaniards and the Basques the vengeance which they all swore against the author of so detestable a murder. They have in fact killed and eaten a great number of them since that time, without any distinction of innocent or guilty.[1] The arms of these cannibals are ordinarily the bow and arrow, with which they are so skilled that they kill every kind of bird upon the wing, and [458] very often they pierce their enemies through and through. The shots from these arrows are very dangerous for this reason, that at the end is always a kind of barb, which remains in the wound when one wishes to draw the arrows out. Some, however, make use of guns, just as do our Gaspesians, who have two or three times ravaged the nation of the Little Eskimaux.

Never does one see in their army either baggage or women, as were in that of Darius, to whom too great a train was the cause of the loss of his life and his kingdom. Our Gaspesians take nothing superfluous ; they are content, like the soldiers of Alexander, in having good arms and very little provision, although they carry [459] the war into the most distant countries, where, however, they find in abundance

[1] This incident appears to be the same as that alluded to by Father Biard in his *Relation* of 1616 (*Jesuit Relations*, Thwaites' edition, III. 69). Father Biard describes this same hostility of the Labrador tribe, which he names *Excomminiquois* (obviously a form of Eskimaux) towards the French. It is also mentioned in brief by Father le Tac (*Histoire Chronologique*, 34), who states that he was told the murderer was a Basque physician. In any case it is quite evident that most of the wealth of detail is supplied by our author's imagination.

that which they need. This is because there is a band of Indians who do the hunting every day, in order to subsist the body of the army, which is constantly making advance.

They never ask the aid of their allies except in the last extremity, finding in their own ambition courage enough to fight and overcome their enemies, if these be not invincible. They ask, nevertheless, for auxiliary troops from their allies if they cannot themselves settle their quarrels ; and they send ambassadors, with collars of wampum, to invite these to take up the hatchet against the enemies of the nation.

[460] War, however, is never declared except by advice of the old men, who alone decide, in the last resort, the affairs of the country. They prescribe the order which must be followed in the execution of their military undertakings ; they fix the day of departure ; and they assemble the young warriors to the war feast. These come there with their usual arms, firmly resolved to fight valiantly for the good of the nation. They paint their faces in red before starting, in order, they say, to conceal from their comrades and from their enemies the various changes of colour which the natural fear of the combat sometimes makes appear in the face, as well as in the heart, of the bravest [461] and the most intrepid.[1]

The speeches, the feasts, the songs, and the dances are no sooner finished than they embark in boats[2] and cross to the Isles aux Maingan, the land of the little Eskimaux. The women and girls without exception invoke their husbands and the young men to do their duty well.

Having arrived at the home of the enemy, they reconnoitre the land and observe the places where the Eskimaux are encamped. Then they attack them vigorously, and take the scalps of all who succumb to the power of their arms, that

[1] Our author has spoken earlier of this matter, at page 62 of his book.

[2] *Chaloupes* in the original ; it is not an error for *canots*, since, as Denys tells us (*Description*, I. 180), the Indians used boats, bought from the French, in their sea voyages.

is, if they are so fortunate as to remain masters of the field of battle.

It is in order to gratify their [462] spirit of cruelty that every one of these barbarians wears always hung from his neck a knife, with which he makes incisions in the heads of their enemies, and removes the skin to which the hair is attached. These they carry off as the glorious mementoes of their valour and spirit. In this they resemble our ancient Gauls, who made no less than our Gaspesians a trophy of their enemies' heads, which they let hang from the breasts of their horses on their return from war. They even attached them to their doors, very much as is done to-day with the heads of bears and of wild boars.

The combat finished, all of our warriors embark to [463] return to their country, where the entire nation receives them with uncommon rejoicings. As soon as the victorious boats of the Gaspesians have been sighted, the girls and women, all painted and adorned and wearing their necklaces of bead-work and of wampum, appear at the edge of the water in order to receive the trophies and the scalps which their husbands are bringing from the combat. They even throw themselves in blind haste into the water in order to receive them, and plunge into the river or the sea every time the warriors make their hues and cries of joy. These cries indicate the number of the enemies they have killed outright, and of the prisoners whom they are bringing to make suffer the usual torments and [464] tortures.[1]

If some one of their number has fallen in the combat, they go into particular mourning for him, and give up several days to grief and sorrowing. Then they make feasts for the dead, at which the chief sets forth in his speech the fine actions of those who have distinguished themselves and who

[1] These ceremonies on the return of the war parties are described in very similar terms in the *Relation* of 1645–46 and in that of 1661–63 (*Jesuit Relations*, Thwaites' edition, XXVIII. 35, and XLVII. 231).

have been killed in the combat. A profound silence follows forthwith, but it is broken suddenly by the relatives of the deceased, who cry aloud with all their might and say, that it is not a question of lamenting further a misfortune for which there is no remedy, but rather of avenging the death of their countrymen by a complete ruin of their enemies. It is thus that our Indians live almost [465] always at war with the Eskimaux. For since it is impossible that somebody shall not remain dead on the battlefield whenever they fight with these barbarians, they are forever newly conceiving designs of revenging themselves, at whatsoever price this may be.

The prisoners, however, are those who suffer the most. Indeed, if the Diomedes, the Buziris, the Diocletians, the Neros, and their like were still alive, I believe that they would hold in horror the vengeance, the tortures, and the cruelty of the Indians of New France, and above all of the Iroquois, towards their prisoners. For, in brief, to cut off the fingers of their enemies : to burn them with glowing firebrands over their whole bodies : to tear away [466] their nails : to make them eat their own flesh after it is all cooked and roasted by the violence of the fire : to throw burning sand, all red hot, upon the wounds of the victim : to pass sticks through the nerves of the arms and the legs, and to turn these until the body becomes quite doubled up by the retraction of these nerves : to make axes red hot and to place them in the manner of a flaming collar upon the body : these are only the usual tortures which the Iroquois and the other nations make their prisoners suffer.[1]

[1] It will be noticed that our author is here describing the tortures inflicted upon prisoners by the Iroquois, not by the Micmacs. I cannot recall a single statement in all of our early records that the Micmacs burnt prisoners at the stake, or inflicted upon them the more cruel of these tortures; while, to the contrary, there is mention in the *Relation* of 1659–60 that it was not their custom to burn prisoners at the stake (*Jesuit Relations*, Thwaites' edition, XLV. 69). Yet they were cruel enough to captives in minor respects.

It has seemed to me in fact that our ancient Gaspesians were not less cruel than the others, since our Indians of the present day exhibited, [467] but a few years since, a remnant of that cruelty in the war which they have waged with the English of New England. In effect, having taken in the heat of combat an English officer who had distinguished himself by the great number of Indians he had killed upon the spot, these barbarians, animated with rage and the spirit of vengeance, stripped him wholly naked and made in his body a number of incisions, through which they passed and tied the set of ribbons which he had on his uniform ; and they did it with such inhumanity that this poor Englishman died under this cruel torture.[1] They are not, however, so cruel with regard to the women and the children ; but, quite on the contrary, they support them and bring them up [468] among those of their own nation. Or, indeed, they not infrequently send them back to their own homes again, without doing them any injury. However, sometimes they break their heads with blows of an axe or a club.

It could scarcely be believed with what fortitude the prisoners endure all the cruelties of their enemies, whom they defy even in the midst of their tortures. This they do even to reproaching them for not knowing anything of how to inflict suffering, and threatening to treat them much more cruelly if they catch them in their country. If you saw them singing in the midst of the flames which surround them on all sides, you would say that they were insensible to these fires. "Ah ! you will kill me," say they to their executioners, "you [469] will burn me. But also you must know that I have killed and burned many of your people. If you eat me, I have the consolation of having also eaten several of your

[1] Our author's account of this matter, while no doubt authentic, appears to lack confirmation in the literature of the French and Indian wars. Dr. S. A. Green, Secretary of the Massachusetts Historical Society, who knows that literature with altogether unusual thoroughness, has been so kind as to make search for a mention of the incident, but without result.

nation. Do then what you will ; I have uncles, I have nephews, brothers and cousins, who will well avenge my death, and who will make you suffer more torments than you know how to invent against me." To die in this manner is, among the Indians, to die as a great captain and as a man of courage. Consequently these barbarians make their children drink the blood of those who die without complaint in the tortures, in order to inspire them with the same courage and bravery. It is a matter of public rejoicing when the victim [470] weeps, groans, or gasps in the excess of his sufferings. This is why these barbarians make him suffer all the torments imaginable ; it is in order to compel him whom they torture to complain, and to confess that they are clever and ingenious in torturing prisoners.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### *On the Hunting of the Gaspesians*

OUR Indians have, apart from war, no occupation more honourable than hunting; and they acquire no less glory and reputation from the number of Moose and of Beavers which they capture, and which they kill in [471] the chase, than from the number of scalps which they take from the heads of their enemies.

The hunting of the Elk, or Moose,[1] is followed at all times of the year. That in winter is the easiest and most like to succeed, especially when the snow is deep, solid, hard and frozen, for because of this the Indians, having snowshoes on their feet, easily approach the elk, which sinks in and cannot escape the pursuit of the hunters. It is different in summer, because these animals run with such speed that it is almost impossible to overtake them, sometimes not even after ten days of pursuit.

The Moose is tall as a horse; it has grayish hair [472] and a head almost like that of a mule. It carries its antlers branched like the stag, except that they are broad as a board, and two to

[1] *L'élan ou orignac* in the original. The former word is the French name for the European elk which our moose so closely resembles, while the latter, which our author sometimes writes in his book *origniac*, is the Canadian-French name, adopted, as Lescarbot tells us, from the Basque word for deer.

The hunting of the moose in the snow was so important a feature of the winter life of the Indians that it receives mention from practically all of our early writers (Lescarbot, *Histoire*, 804; Champlain, *Voyages*, Laverdière's edition, 191; Denys, *Description*, II. 425; Gyles, *Memoirs*, 19; *Jesuit Relations*, Thwaites' edition, XXXII. 41, XLV. 61, XLIX. 159). So dependent were they upon this hunting that in winters when snow was scant they were like to starve, while abundant snows meant a winter of good cheer.

three feet long ; they are provided on both sides with prongs, which fall in autumn and are renewed in the spring with the addition of as many new branches as there are years.[1] It browses on grass, and grazes in the meadows along the margins of the rivers, and in the forests during the summer. In winter it eats the tenderest tips of the branches of trees. Its hoof is cloven, and the left hind foot is a remedy against epilepsy ; but it must be secured, say the Indians, at a time when the animal is itself ill from this malady, of which it cures itself by placing this left foot to its ear.[2] In [473] its heart is found a little bone which the Gaspesians call *Oagando hi guidanne*[3] ; it is a sovereign remedy for easing the confinements of women, and for relieving the spasms and the sufferings of childbirth, when taken in broth after having been first reduced to powder. This animal weeps like stags and hinds when it is taken and cannot escape death ; the tears fall from its eyes as large as peas. It does not fail, however, to defend itself the very best that it can ; and an approach to it is somewhat dangerous, because, thanks to a road which it has the cunning to beat out with its feet, it charges at times with such fury upon the hunters and their dogs, that it buries [474] both the one and the other in the snow, with a result that a number

[1] In this paragraph our author promulgates several errors, which is surprising since he should have known the moose well; but then, as this chapter will show, our good missionary was no naturalist. The colour of the moose is not grayish, except on some under parts and in old age, but is brownish to nearly black ; it is not the prongs of the antlers which fall, but the entire horn, and they fall in early winter rather than in autumn ; and while the moose does, to a small extent, browse on grass in meadows, it is principally lily-roots and other succulent water plants which it seeks along the margins of streams and lakes.

[2] This bit of folk-medicine is also mentioned by Denys (*Description*, II. 320), and doubtless represents a widely repeated belief of the time.

[3] The first part of this phrase, *Oagando* is evidently simply the Micmac word for "bone," which Rand gives as *Wŏkundāoo* (*English-Micmac Dictionary*, 40). The remainder I have not been able to trace in Rand's works, but Father Pacifique suggests that the *hi* is no doubt a misprint for *ni*, making the two words equal to the modern Micmac *nigitami*, which means "for giving birth." This makes the phrase quite clear.

of Indians are often crippled by them, while their dogs are killed on the spot. The hunters know the places where the moose have their retreat from certain gnawed or broken tips of branches, which they call Pactagane,[1] that is to say, the depredations of the Elk. They chew this wood, and they recognise from the taste of the branches the time since these animals have passed this place. They capture them sometimes from ambush, and also by use of certain nooses made of large leather thongs set in the usual trail of this animal.

The most ingenious method which our Gaspesians have for taking the Moose is this. The hunters, knowing [475] the place on the river where it is accustomed to resort when in heat, embark at night in a canoe, and, approaching the meadow where it has its retreat, browses, and usually sleeps, one of them imitates the cry of the female, while the other at the same time takes up water in a bark dish, and lets it fall drop by drop, as if it were the female relieving herself of her water. The male approaches, and the Indians who are on the watch kill him with shots from their guns. The same cunning and dexterity they also use with respect to the female, by counterfeiting the cry of the male.[2]

The hunting of the Beaver is as easy in summer as it is laborious in winter, although it is equally pleasing and [476] entertaining in both of these two seasons, because of the pleasure it is to see this animal's natural industry, which transcends the imagination of those who have never seen the surprising evidences thereof. Consequently the Indians say

[1] Evidently involving the roots of the Micmac *pakadoo*, "to bite" (Rand, *English-Micmac Dictionary*, 37) and the termination *okun*, meaning place of occurrence.

[2] This account of the habits and the hunting of the moose accords with other information given in the *Jesuit Relations*, by Denys, and by others, while adding a few new points. The calling of the bull moose by the method here described is also related by Denys (*Description*, II. 424) and is still in extensive use. The killing of cow moose is now prohibited by law; but aside from this, I have never heard of the calling of cow moose by the method of imitating the call of the bull.

that the Beavers have sense, and form a separate nation; and they say they would cease to make war upon these animals if these would speak, howsoever little, in order that they might learn whether the Beavers are among their friends or their enemies.

The Beaver is of the bigness of a water-spaniel. Its fur is chestnut, black, and rarely white, but always very soft and suitable for the making of hats. It is the great trade of New France. The Gaspesians say that the Beaver is the beloved of the French and [477] of the other Europeans, who seek it greedily; and I have been unable to keep from laughing on overhearing an Indian, who said to me in banter, *Tahoé messet kogoüar pajo ne daoüi dogoüil mkobit.*[1] "In truth, my brother, the Beaver does everything to perfection. He makes for us kettles, axes, swords, knives, and gives us drink and food without the trouble of cultivating the ground."

This animal has short feet; those in front are formed like paws, and those behind like fins, very much as in the Seals. It walks very slowly. For a time it was considered

[1] The modern Micmac equivalents of these words can be traced with considerable certainty through Rand's *English-Micmac Dictionary*, to which the following page numbers refer. *Tahoé* evidently involves the root of *Dā*, meaning "friend," to which the Indian "brother" is equivalent (117); *messet* evidently equals *'Msŭt*, meaning "every" (101); *kogoüar pajo* evidently involves the roots of *kokwŏjeā'*, meaning "good," in the sense of "well" (122); *ne daoüi* is the same as *na tŭhŭ*, meaning "it is a fact" (105); *dogoüil* equals *ĕlookwā'*, meaning "to do," the *d* being probably a misprint for *el* (88); while *mkobit* is *kobet* meaning "a beaver," with the *m* perhaps indicating a skin (32). The entire phrase would then read, "My friend, every(thing) well it is a fact does the beaver."

Our author says that an Indian used this expression to him. Yet in the *Relation* of Father le Jeune of 1634 we read: "The Savages [*i.e.* the Montagnais] say that it [the beaver] is the animal well-beloved by the French, English, and Basques,—in a word by the Europeans. I heard my host say one day, jokingly, *Missi picoutau amiscou*, 'The Beaver does everything perfectly well, it makes kettles, hatchets, swords, knives, bread; and, in short, it makes everything'" (Thwaites' edition, VI., 297). I have pointed out in the Introduction (page 18) the probable meaning of the resemblances between the work of our author and of Father le Jeune.

amphibious, half-flesh half-fish, because it has a tail of appearance very like a sole, furnished [478] with scales which are not removable; but at present it is eaten like fish in Lent, whether it be so in fact, or whether it is in order to obviate abuses which had crept in, some reducing to tail more than half of the body of that animal. It has a large but short head; its jaws are armed with four large cutting teeth, to wit, two above and two below, which are suitable for polishing gold or silver, since they are both hard and soft at one and the same time. With these four teeth the Beaver cuts little poles for building its house, as well as trees as large as the thigh; these it can fell exactly in the very spot where it foresees that they will be most useful and most needed. It cuts [479] these trees into pieces of different lengths, according to the use it wishes to make of them. It rolls them on the ground or pushes them through the water with its fore-paws, in order to build its house and to construct a dam which checks the current of a stream and forms a considerable pond, on the shore of which it usually dwells. There is always a master Beaver, which oversees this work, and which even beats those that do their duty badly. They all cart earth upon their tails, marching upon their hind feet and carrying in their fore-paws the wood which they need to accomplish their work. They mix the earth with the wood, and make a kind of masonry with their tails, [480] very much as do the masons with their trowels. They build causeways and dams of a breadth of two or three feet, a height of twelve or fifteen feet, and a length of twenty or thirty; these are so inconvenient and difficult to break that this is in fact the hardest task in the hunting of the Beaver, which, by means of these dams, makes from a little stream a pond so considerable that they flood very often a large extent of country. They even obstruct the rivers so much that it is often necessary to get into the water in order to lift the canoes over the dams, as has happened several times to myself in going from

Nipisiguit to the River of Sainte-Croix,[1] and in other places in Gaspesia.

[481] The Beaver's house is of some seven to eight feet in height, so well built and cemented with earth and wood that neither the rain nor the wind can enter. It is divided into three stories, and in these the large, the mid-sized, and the small beavers live separately and sleep upon straw. And the following circumstance is also worthy of remark, that when the number of these animals, which multiply rapidly, comes to increase, the older yield the house to the younger, which never fail to aid the others in building a house. It is as if these animals wished to give a natural lesson to both fathers and children mutually to aid one another.

The Beaver does not feed [482] in the water, as some have imagined. It takes its food on land, eating certain barks of trees, which it cuts into fragments and transports to its house for use as provision during the winter. Its flesh is delicate, and very much like that of mutton. The kidneys[2] are sought by apothecaries, and are used with effect in easing women in childbirth, and in mitigating hysterics.

Whenever the Beaver is hunted, whether this be in winter or in summer, it is always needful to break and tear down the house, all the approaches to which our Indians note exactly, in order, with greater assurance of success, to besiege and attack this animal which is entrenched in his little fort.

[483] In Spring and Summer they are taken in traps;

[1] The river here meant, on the old portage route from Nepisiguit to Miramichi, must be Portage River (shown on the map on page 175), for both the Nepisiguit and the Northwest Miramichi are too large to be dammed by beavers, and Gordon Brook is a very small stream. It interests me to recall that I have myself, within four years past, seen several fine new Beaver dams on this same Portage River, to which, as to others of their ancient haunts, the Beaver, long nearly extinct in this region, are now returning under the efficient protection they are receiving from the New Brunswick Government. Our author refers to his travel by this route on page 193 of his book.

[2] The castor glands are not the kidneys (*roignons*), but special glandular pouches situated in the groins.

when one of these is sprung a large piece of wood falls across their backs and kills them. But there is nothing so interesting as the hunting in the winter, which is, nevertheless, very wearisome and laborious. For the following is necessary ; one must break the ice in more than forty or fifty places : must cut the dams : must shatter the houses : and must cause the waters to run off, in order to see and more easily discover the Beavers. These animals make sport of the hunter, scorn him, and very often escape his pursuit by slipping from their pond through a secret outlet, which they have the instinct to leave in their dam in communication with [484] another neighbouring pond.[1]

I pass here without mention the different kinds of hunting of Otters, Bears, Deer, and a number of other animals of Gaspesia, because they exhibit nothing of especial importance ; and it will be more to the purpose to give the reader some knowledge of the different kinds of wild beasts, birds, and fish which occur in Gaspesia. One sees there, first of all, three kinds of Partridges, of which some have the eye of a pheasant, and a plumage mottled with black, with white, with gray, and with orange. The others are gray, and I have seen a number during the winter which were entirely white.[2] The Partridges of Canada perch and roost in trees ; and they eat the birch [485] or the fir, which imparts to them a little of its bitter taste. Their stomachs are white and delicate like that

[1] Except for some exaggeration in certain points, *e.g.* the height of the dams, the carting of earth on the beavers' tails, and somewhat too confident assertions about their home habits, this account of the beaver is fairly accurate and in accord with other evidence ; and the author shows much self-restraint in omitting the marvellous and entertaining tales then current about this animal. His account differs in this, as in many other particulars, from that given by Denys (*Description*, II. 284). Further material on this subject is in the notes to the *Champlain Society's Denys*, 367.

[2] These three partridges are readily recognisable ; the first is the Spruce, or Canada Grouse, the second is the Common Birch, or Ruffed Grouse, and the third is the Ptarmigan, or Willow Grouse, which occasionally crosses from Labrador to Gaspé. The account which follows of the Birch Partridge is accurate, except that it seems to attribute the "drumming" to the female.

of a capon, and those which eat only birch are excellent, in whatsoever manner one prepares them. The hunting of them is easy, especially in Spring, when they seek to lay their eggs ; because then they make a noise, by beating with their wings, and this reveals them to the hunter. And they are so little wild that one can drive them like chickens before him ; and they even allow themselves to be approached near enough to permit one to extend a noose attached to the end of a pole, through which they pass the head, and thus render easy this method of capture.

The Canadian Ducks are [486] like those which we have in France. There is, however, one different species, which we call Canards Branchus ;[1] these perch upon trees, and their plumage is very beautiful because of the pleasing diversity of the colours which compose it.

The Humming-bird,[2] which some call the Bird of Heaven, is of the size of a nut. Its beak is slender and pointed as a needle. It lives solely upon the nectar of flowers, like the honey flies. Its plumage is of ravishing beauty, notably that of the throat, which is adorned with an azure and a dazzling red, which one cannot sufficiently admire, especially when it is exposed to the sun. Our Gaspesians call it Nirido, and [487] it is hunted solely as a curiosity. The guns are loaded with sand, because even the smallest shot would be too large for killing this tiny bird, which is dried in the oven and in the sun, for fear lest decay come in a body which seems wholly plumage.

The Woodpeckers, which we call by this name because

[1] The description makes it perfectly plain that this is the beautiful Wood-Duck, which is also mentioned under this same name by Diéreville (*Voyage*, 212). The name has survived in Quebec, as shown by Clapin's *Dictionnaire Canadien-Français*.

[2] *Oiseau mouche* in the original ; this very beautiful bird, unknown in France, attracted the attention of all the early writers, and Lescarbot, Denys, Diéreville and others describe it. Its modern Micmac name is *Niledow* (Rand, *English-Micmac Dictionary*), obviously the same word as our author's *Nirido* with the usual substitution of *r* for *l*.

they take their food by pricking the trunks of rotten trees, are marked by two kinds of plumage. Some are spotted with black and white, while others are wholly black, and bear on the head a remarkably beautiful crest.[1] They have extremely tough tongues which are as sharp as needles, and with these they make [488] holes in the trees large enough to insert the fist.

The Eagles, the Sparrows, the Song Sparrows (whose song is not so pleasing by a great deal as those of the nightingales of Europe), the Canada Goose, the Snow Goose, the Ducks, the Swans, the Cormorants, the White-throated Sparrows, the Gull, the Gannet, the Snipe, the Sandpipers, the Snow Buntings, the Thrushes, the Robins, the Jays, the Ravens, the Dippers, birds entirely white, entirely red, blue, yellow, and an infinity of others, are very abundant in Gaspesia, but are unknown in France.[2] An account of them

[1] The black and white woodpeckers are of course the several small species, not here distinguished, while the kind that is black with a beautiful crest is plainly the Pileated Woodpecker, or Blackcock, which occurs in this region. Our author trips in his natural history in supposing that they make holes in trees with their tongues; this of course is done with their bills.

[2] The names of these birds in the original are, respectively, *aigles, titiais, rossignols, outarde, oie, canards, cignes, cormorans, siffleurs, goilan, margot, beccasses, beccassines, ortolans, grives, merles, pies, corbeaux, marionnets.* The identity of most of them is rendered plain by the fact that their names are still in use either among the French of Canada, as recorded in Professor C. E. Dionne's *Catalogue des Oiseaux de la Province de Quebec* (Quebec, J. Dussault, 1889), or else among the Acadians of the Maritime Provinces, according to notes sent me by the late Dr. A. C. Smith of Tracadie, N.B. I have discussed somewhat fully the identity of them all, with a summary of the evidence in doubtful cases, in a paper upon "The Identity of the Animals and Plants mentioned by the Early Voyagers to Eastern Canada," which is expected to appear in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada* in 1910.

Some comment, however, upon several of the names will here be in place. The name *titiais* I have not been able to identify with certainty, and I can only surmise that it is a corruption or form of *Titits*, which in France is applied to the Hedge Sparrow; I suspect that the word was applied by our unscientific author to various small birds of the sparrow-like kinds. The name *rossignol* is used by the French in both Quebec and Acadia for the Song Sparrow, though in France it is the name of the Nightingale. It seems strange enough that the name of the finest songster of Europe should have been transferred

would be useless, since there is nothing about them more curious than the names they have been given.

There occur also among our Gaspesians three kinds of Wolves.[1] The Lynx has a [489] silvery fur, and two little tufts, of wholly black fur, on its head. Its flesh is pretty good, although it has rather a rank taste. This animal is more frightful to the eye than savage. Its skin is very good for making furs.[2]

The Seal[3] is a kind of fish, with a mottled skin and a black and white fur. It bears its young upon land, or upon some rocks or other. The mother has the instinct of carrying them on her back in order to teach them how to swim when they become too wearied in the water. Their feet are very short, those in front being paws and those behind fins. They do not walk, but creep on the sand, where they sleep and disport themselves in the [490] sun, especially when the tide

to this modest little bird of Canada, whose simple notes would hardly receive any attention at all were it not that they are the first to be heard at the beginning of spring. But perhaps in this latter fact we find the explanation of the transfer of names; the cheery little song which told the first French who wintered in Canada that the long winter was now over and the spring really at hand, doubtless seemed to them the sweetest song that ever they heard, so they gave it the name of the sweetest songster they knew. The *Siffleur* in Canada to-day is the White-throated Sparrow or Peabody Bird; the name is very appropriate, and I believe this was its use by our author, even though he places it among sea birds. From the latter circumstance it might be thought that he meant the Whistler Duck, but he mentions the ducks separately and this species is not conspicuous enough to be singled out by itself; and besides the order of our author's list means little and involves other similar anomalies. Thus, the *marionette*, as the persistence of the name in Canada and Louisiana proves, is the Dipper, a sea bird which our author separates widely from the other sea birds.

The only other birds mentioned by our author in his book are the *Emerillion* or Falcon (of which on page 164 he gives the Gaspesian name of *Smagnis* or *Koucdedaoui*), and *Sarcelles*, the Teal, noted on page 91.

[1] Two of these three, as the reader will note, are wolves only in their French names, not in zoological fact.

[2] A very good description of the *Loup servier*, as our author calls this animal; would that he had described others as well.

[3] *Loup marin*, that is, translated, Sea Wolf, as our author, and all the French, called the Seals. Of course all the early voyagers rated it among the fish.

is low, which is the most suitable and convenient time to hunt them. This is very profitable, as much because of their oil as for the considerable trade there is in the skins of these fish, of which some are large and stout as horses and oxen. These seals are called Metauh, to distinguish them from the common kinds, which are called Oüaspons.[1] Their flesh is passably good, and the pluck appears to be of as good a taste as pork. The other wolves[2] are very much like ours in Europe, excepting that they are not so vicious or cruel.

The Hares of Canada are [491] very different from those of France, and they resemble rabbits. Their flesh, nevertheless, is delicate enough, especially when it is used in a meat pie or as a stew. Many have a bitter taste, because of the fir which they eat during the winter, though it is very probable that they feed on grass in summer. It is a curious feature of these animals that their fur changes colour according to the seasons of the year. It begins to turn white on the approach of winter, and it is wholly white when the land is covered with snow. But it loses this whiteness and becomes entirely gray in the Spring and during the Summer.[3]

[1] The latter kind of Seal, as the description shows, is the Harbour Seal. Its modern Micmac name is *Wŏspoo* (Rand, *English-Micmac Dictionary*, 228), which suggests that our author's form may be misprinted from *Oüaspous*. As to the other kind, their size, "as large and stout as horses and oxen," would suggest that they were Sea-cows or Walrus, which occurred in parts of Gaspesia in our author's day. But the Micmac name for Walrus is very different from our author's *Metauh*, while, on the other hand, Rand gives the word *'Mtaakw* as a female Hooded Seal (*op. cit.*, 228). As this species does occur in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, and moreover is a much larger species than the Harbour Seal, it seems likely that it is the one meant by our author, whose name is probably misprinted from *Metauk*. It is, however, also possible that he really meant the Walrus, and confused its name with that of the Hooded Seal.

[2] The Common Gray, or Timber Wolf, formerly occurred in this region, and perhaps still lingers in the Gaspé Peninsula. Its range in Acadia is discussed in the *Bulletin of the Natural History Society of New Brunswick*, VI., 1908, 30.

[3] In a general way our author's account of the Hares (*Liévres*) is accurate. But their summer colour is brown, not gray.

The Bears, the Wolverene, the Deer, the Foxes, the Caribou [492], Martens, Porcupines, Muskrats, Squirrels, &c., are as many animals as occur commonly in Gaspesia.[1] Here also are seen prodigious quantities of all kinds of fish, Cod, Salmon, Herring, Trout, Bass, Mackerel, Flounders, Shad, Sturgeon, Suckers, Pikes, Pond-fish, Eels, Squid, Pickerel, Oysters, Smelt, Skate, Whitefish.[2] In a word, one can say that the hunting and fishing there are profuse, and that one can find, without much difficulty, everything necessary for life.

It is interesting to see there, likewise, the immense number

[1] The identity of these animals is too obvious to need comment. Our author's name for the Wolverene is *quinquajou*, a word whose curious history, involving a case of mistaken identity, is traced in my article mentioned in the footnote on page 282. Our author also mentions this animal in another connection at pages 343 and 347 of his book. His *Cerfs* must be applied to the Virginia Deer, not to the Wapiti, which the French called *Cerf* on the Upper Saint Lawrence. *Caribou*, it is of interest to note, is also a native Micmac name, first used by Lescarbot in 1609, and soon adopted by the French.

The only other animal mentioned by our author elsewhere in his book is the *Nigaiou*, or little Moose, at page 119.

[2] The names of these fishes in the original are, respectively, *moruë, saumon, harans, truites, bar, maquereau, barbuë, aloze, esturgeon, carpes, brochets, brémes, anguilles, ancornets, poisson doré, huîtres, esplan, raie, poisson blanc*. The identity of most of these is perfectly plain, since the names are still in use, and, moreover, they are discussed fully in my paper mentioned in the note on page 282. *Barbuë* is the name in France for a kind of Sand Dab, and hence was no doubt transferred by our author to the common Flounders of the Gaspesian coast. *Carpes* (Carps) do not occur in this region at all, but the name is now applied in Canada to a kind of Sucker (the *moxostôme doré*) abundant in the tributaries of the Lower Saint Lawrence (Montpetit, *Les Poissons d'Eau Douce*, Montreal, 1897, 507). Neither do *brémes* (Breams) occur in this region; but the name is used in Canada for the common Pond-fish (Montpetit, *op. cit.*, 512). *Poisson doré* is the name now applied in French Canada to the Pickerel, and hence no doubt was thus used by our author. But it is to be remembered, with respect especially to such names as *brémes*, that they may not represent names actually applied by the French to particular fish in Gaspesia, but simply names familiar to our author from their use in France, and added here from his own supposition that such fish occurred in these waters. Oysters, of course, do occur all along the coast from Caraquet southward. Another fish mentioned by our author elsewhere in his book is *ponamon*, the Tomcod or Frost Fish, on page 160.

of Whales, and especially the terrific combat of this mammoth fish with the Swordfish. The latter bears upon its back a [493] kind of sword, or harpoon, which serves it as arms for offence or defence, and for attacking and defending itself from the flippers and the tail of the Whale. It is wonderful to see the approaches and the mutual attacks of these two powerful enemies, which bellow like bulls when inspired by rage and fury. The Swordfish darts itself out of the water and falls with all its power upon the Whale, turning over, meanwhile, in order to pierce the latter with its harpoon. The Whale plunges under the water, and escapes the blows of the Swordfish, which it tries to strike and to beat with its tail and flippers; and the noise is audible more than a league away. The sea appears all stirred up by the movements and violent efforts of these [494] formidable fish, and it becomes all reddened with their blood, which pours profusely from their wounds. These sometimes cause their death. Such was the case with the whale which we found stranded on the coast some fifteen leagues from the river of St. Joseph, surnamed Ristigouche. The sand which covered it kept us from seeing the fearful blows which it had received from the Swordfish. We saw only two or three of these, which seemed very large and deep. Although the Whale is a fish of prodigious bigness and strength, nevertheless it cannot overturn nor shatter ships with its tail, as some are persuaded a little too easily.[1]

The Shark, which some call requiem,[2] is a [495] very dangerous fish, armed with two to three rows of teeth; it is

[1] Our author's account of the Whale and Swordfish combats recalls that given by Denys (*Description*, II. 269), but the two are evidently independent though based upon the same current stories of the time. The mention of the sword on the back of the Swordfish shows that our author had in mind the Orca, or Killer-whale, with its long dorsal fin, rather than the Swordfish. The attacks of the two upon the Whales are commonly confused.

[2] *Le requin, que quelques-uns appellent requiem*, in the original. The attributes here ascribed to the Shark are of course the conventional ones for that fish the world over, and not those of the Gaspesian species.

four to five feet long, and proportionately thick. It is very dangerous to bathe in the places where this fish ordinarily resorts, because it runs after those whom it perceives in the water and bites away an arm or a leg, which it eats and swallows at one operation. I recall that a poor passenger who had thrown himself into the sea for amusement, in order to bathe during a period of calm, fine, and serene weather, was so unfortunate as to encounter one of these sharks; it did him no injury so long as he was in the water, but so soon as those on the ship set to work to save this poor fellow, the shark darted [496] upon him, and bit off his leg before he was inside the boat, where he died two hours later.

## CHAPTER XIX

*The Feasts, Dances, and Amusements of the Gaspesians*

A NATION can hardly be found which has feasts more in vogue than have the Indians of New France, and especially our Gaspesians, who take much more account of the affection and sincerity of a truly hearty friendship in the little which they give or receive from their friends than in the quantity or the quality of the viands. Consequently with a [497] bit of tobacco, or something else of little account, they entertain one another just as if they were making the greatest feasts in the world. Hence it comes about that the most miserable of them (if one indeed can say that there are any such in this nation of barbarians which does not admit any, or very little, distinction between rich and poor), find always in even the little they possess the wherewithal to repay their friends in kind, and to give feasts as important as those to which they have been invited.

I have made very advantageous use of this great ease with which one may satisfy this people, and insinuate oneself into their friendship by means of feasts which do not cost much.

[498] This was when, after an Indian had come to beg me to go to baptize a little infant, which died two days after its baptism, I remained the rest of the winter[1] in the Bay of Gachpé with these pagans in order to try to gain them to

[1] It seems clear, from the tenor of this passage and of others on pages 501 and 540, that our author here refers to his first residence with the Indians; and accordingly the incident he now proceeds to describe must have occurred in the latter part of the winter of 1675–76. His occupations during the earlier part of the same winter are mentioned on page 24 of his book.

JESUS CHRIST. Monsieur Denys had given our Gaspesians some peas and flour, in order that I might entertain the camps therewith through the medium of two feasts which I had intended to make for them, and which in fact gained me permanently the friendship of these barbarians. I made from all my flour as many heart-shaped cakes as we were persons, and having had them cooked in a kettle with some marrow of moose, I arranged them all on a bark dish in such fashion that the largest of these hearts, which [499] represented my own, concealed and covered the smaller ones, which symbolised those of the Indians. I made them the usual speech, which must always precede the feasts, saying to them : that Nature having given me only one heart, the charity and the zeal which I had for their salvation made me hope passionately that it would multiply itself to as many as there were Gaspesians there present before my eyes ; that I wished likewise to embrace therein those who were absent, in order to testify to them all equally my esteem and my affection ; that by the largest of all these hearts which concealed the others, I wished to make them understand that they would lodge for the future through affection in mine ; that I took them all under my protection, in order [500] to procure them all the advantages that they could reasonably hope from this relation, whether in things spiritual or in things temporal ; and that finally I had arranged the cakes all together in a single bark dish only in order to make them understand that our hearts ought never more to separate willingly, but rather to unite closely in the indissoluble bonds of Christian charity. This little speech was closed by the presentation and distribution which I made of all these hearts to each Indian, saying to him these words, *Tahoé nkameramon ignemoulo ; nkameramon achkou oüiguidex.*[1] "My brother, I give you my heart ; you will

[1] The equivalents of these words in modern Micmac, as given in Rand's *English-Micmac Dictionaries,* are as follows : *Tahoé,* evidently involves the root of *Dā,* meaning "friend" (page 117), if not simply a form of it ; *nkameramon*

dwell and will be encamped for the future in my heart." It is [501] unbelievable how completely gratified these barbarians were by my entertainment, which they received with all possible joy. The chiefs gave me feasts both publicly and individually, in order to testify to me that they had begotten me,[1] that is to say, that they had adopted and received me into the membership of the Gaspesian Indians. They all entreated me to remain with them in order to perfect myself in their language, something which I granted all the more readily since the request and petition which they made of me was in accord with my own inclinations.

Nevertheless, although these barbarians are content with a little in their feasts, they do not fail to display sometimes a great profusion of viands, especially in [502] the feasts which they make in spring in order to rejoice together over the happy success of the hunting which they have carried on during the winter. They observe no sort of economy in these kinds of feasts, in order to testify in this way to their friends the joy that they have in their company. The women, the children, the young boys who have not yet killed any moose,

is exactly equivalent to *'mkâmlâmŭn*, meaning "heart" (page 130); *ignemoulo* is equivalent to *igŭnŭmooā'* meaning "to give" (page 121), of course brought into the first person singular; *achkou* seems to represent *apchou*, meaning "forever" (page 101), another form of which appears to be the *apche* of page 414 of our author's book; *oüiguidex*, which in the repetition of this sentence on page 541 is spelled *oüiguidepcheup*, involves the root of *Weegijik*, meaning "to encamp" (page 99), apparently with a second person singular termination in one case and the second person plural in the other, more or less misprinted. The entire phrase, therefore, would read literally: "Brother, my heart I give: my heart forever you will encamp in."

[1] This phrase in the original is *m'enfantoient*, literally "given me birth." The same expression is used by our author at page 531 of his book, and he gives a mention of the same ceremony among the Montagnais in his *First Establishment of the Faith* (I. 133). All the evidence shows that *enfanter* implied a kind of new birth, and that thereafter the adopted person was looked upon as one actually of the blood of the tribe, and having actual relatives among them.

and all of those who are not in condition to go to war against the enemy, do not, as a rule, enter into the wigwams where there is feasting. They must await the signal which an Indian gives, by means of two or three different cries; by these the women know that it is time to come for the remains of the portions left by their husbands, upon which they regale themselves with their families and friends.

[503] The manner of giving invitations to the feast is without compliment or ceremony, and nobody is invited until everything which the host wishes to give them is all ready cooked. He who is giving the treat then gives from the door of his wigwam the cry for the feast, speaking these words: *Chigoüidah, ouikbarlno.*[1] "Come ye here into my wigwam, for I wish to entertain you." Those to whom these words are addressed answer him by three or four cries of "ho, ho, ho, ho"; they issue promptly from their own homes with the ouragan,[2] enter into the wigwam of the feast, take the first place which presents itself, smoke some tobacco from the pipe of the chief, and receive without ceremony the portion which he who is dividing and distributing the meat tosses them, or gives them [504] at the end of a stick.

The Gaspesians never make a feast of two kinds of meat at once. They do not mix, for example, the beaver with moose, nor that with bear, or any other animal. They even make feasts in which grease and oil are drunk quite pure. There are feasts of health, of farewell, of hunting, of peace, of war, of thanks. There are eat-all feasts, which are made

[1] The modern equivalent of these Micmac words is not difficult to trace. *Chigoüidah* evidently involves the same roots as the *wechkooeā'* meaning "to come" (Rand, *English-Micmac Dictionary*, 63), while *ouikbarlno* involves the roots of *wegoobaloōā'*, meaning "to make a feast" (*op. cit.*, 107).

[2] In modern Micmac *Oolâkŭn*, meaning "a dish" (Rand, *English-Micmac Dictionary*, 85) obviously the same word with the usual substitution of *r* for *l*. The word appears frequently in the literature dealing with our Indians, and persists in modern Canadian French applied to a little basket of birch bark used for holding bread, &c. (Clapin, *Dictionnaire Canadien-Français*, 231).

expressly for securing good hunting ; these are feasts in which it is necessary that everything be eaten before anybody goes out from the wigwam, and in which it is forbidden to give anything, howsoever little, to the dogs under penalty of being exposed to great ills.[1] It is, however, permissible for those who cannot finish their portions [505] to present them to their companions, each one of whom takes whatever he desires thereof. The remainder is thrown upon the fire, whilst eulogies are made of him who at this juncture has captured the glory and the reputation of having eaten more than the others.

All the feasts begin with speeches, which the host makes to those assembled for the purpose of declaring to them the subject on account of which he has wished to entertain the company ; and they are finished with dances and songs which are the usual compliments of our Indians.[2] The master of the feast does not as a rule eat with the others, because, says he, he has not invited them in order to diminish the portion of that which he presents to them, the whole being solely [506] for them.

Their songs and their dances are alike unpleasant, because they do not observe any regularity or measure except such as their caprice may inspire. They have, nevertheless, rather good voices as a rule, and especially the women, who chant very pleasingly the spiritual canticles which are taught them, and in which they make a large part of their devotions

[1] Of the Indian feasts Father le Caron wrote in 1624 : "There are farewell feasts, complimentary feasts, war, peace, death, health, and marriage feasts. In their banquets they pass days and nights, especially when they make feasts which they call 'eat all,' for no one is permitted to leave till he has swallowed everything." (*First Establishment of the Faith*, I. 222.) Denys, and others of our writers, also give much attention to these feasts, which were so prominent in Indian life.

[2] An oration in praise of him who gave the feast was also customary, and a particularly fine example thereof is given in *Account of the Customs and Manners of the Micmacs*, &c. : London, 1758, page 7.

consist.[1] These women do not give the same pleasure when they sing in the manner of the Indians, who force from the bottoms of their stomachs certain tones of ho, ho, ho, ha, ha, ha, hé, hé, hé, ho, ho, ha, he, he, which pass for airs alike charming and melodious among our Gaspesians.

They dance as a rule [507] in a ring, in time to the noise which they make by striking with a stick upon a bark plate or upon a kettle. They do not hold one another by the hands, but all keep their fists closed. The girls cross theirs over one another, a little out from the stomach. The men raise theirs in the air, and make sundry movements with different postures as if they were at war, representing fighting, winning victory, and removing the scalps from their enemies. They do not jump, but in lieu thereof, they strike the ground, sometimes with one foot, sometimes with both together.[2]

The special dances of the women and the girls are very different from those of the men, for they make some [508] horrible contortions in dancing. They draw back and push

[1] Our author again mentions the pleasing singing of the Indians at page 535 of his book.

The good voices of the Micmacs are mentioned by several writers. One of the *Jesuit Relations* says "some of them, in truth, have very fine voices" (Thwaites' edition, XXVIII. 33), and another uses the phrase "so melodiously did the Savages sing" (*op. cit.*, XXX. 141). Our author's contemporary, Monseigneur de Saint Valier, heard them sing at Miramichi in 1686, and said of them, " I had the consolation . . . of hearing them chant the evening and morning prayers in a manner very devout, and, as it seemed to me, pretty harmoniously" (translation from *Estat present de l'Eglise*, 89). Somewhat later Diéreville wrote: "Their voices are very pleasing when they wish to sing well," and again, "the voices of the women in particular were so sweet and touching that I thought I heard angels chanting the praises of God" (translation from *Voyage*, 179). L'Abbé Maillard says: "The majority of the Indian woman have very pleasing and very soft voices, which they know remarkably well how to keep in tune in singing" (Translation from Letter in *Les Soirées Canadiennes*, III., 1863, 355). And still later Gamaliel Smethurst who was among them in 1761, under conditions not predisposing him in their favour, said, "they sing very well" (Narrative reprinted in the *Collections of the New Brunswick Historical Society*, II. 381).

[2] Another interesting account of the Micmac dances is given by Diéreville, *Voyage*, 179, 181.

out the arms, the hands, and the whole body, in a manner altogether hideous, looking intently on the earth as if they would draw out something therefrom by the very strength and force of their contortions. This they continue until they are all of a perspiration. They do not force from the bottoms of their stomachs, as do the men, those hues and cries of ho, ho, of ha, ha, of hé, hé; but their only sound is made with their lips, and is a certain hissing like a serpent. This is the usual tune of their dance, which can properly be designated an innocent Indian racket.

Besides these dances and feasts, they have as their common amusements the games of Leldestaganne and of the Chagat.[1] [509] which they play with little black and white bones. That person wins the game who makes them turn out all white or all black as many times as they have agreed. They

[1] The game of *Leldestaganne* has already been mentioned by our author in another connection at page 318 (where, however, he misspells it *Ledelstaganne*), and at page 324. It is exactly the game still played by the Micmacs, and called by them *altestakun* (*Altĕstăkŭn*, "Indian Dice," Rand, *English-Micmac Dictionary*, 82). It is fully described by S. Hagar in the *American Anthropologist*, VIII., 1895, 31), and his description is repeated, with illustrations and additional matter, in S. Culin's fine monograph on the "Games of the North American Indians" in the *Twenty-fourth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, Washington, 1907, 74. It is a gambling game, played with six flat round dice of caribou bone, plain on one side ("white" of our author) and ornamented on the other ("black" of our author). The dice are bounced in a flat wooden dish about a foot in diameter, and the nearer one can make them fall all plain sides or all marked sides up the higher is the count, which is kept by a system of special sticks. This game is played by the Passamaquoddy Indians, and is fully described by Mrs. Wallace Brown in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, VI., 1888, ii. 41; and she gives a vivid account of its prominence in Indian life and of the intense interest it often excited. Its prominence in Micmac life receives curious illustration in the tradition mentioned by our author at page 318 of his book. Our author's mention of the game not only fixes its antiquity, but also shows the ancient form of its name.

Of the game of *Chagat* I can find no trace. It is not mentioned in Culin's monograph above cited. Our author uses the name in a way to imply that it and Leldestaganne are played with the same implements, and hence it is probably only a minor variant of the greater game.

are very faithful in paying whatever they have lost at the game, without quarrelling or expressing the least word of impatience ; because, say they, they play only for diversion, and to enjoy themselves with their friends. There are also several other kinds of games and amusements among our Indians, but they are of so little account that they do not merit that any further mention of them should here be made.

[510] CHAPTER XX

*On the Remedies, Diseases, and Death of the Gaspesians*

THEY are all by nature physicians, apothecaries, and doctors, by virtue of the knowledge and experience they have of certain herbs, which they use successfully to cure ills that seem to us incurable.

It is a fact that our Gaspesians generally enjoy perfect health right up to a fine old age, for they are not subject to several of the maladies which afflict us in France, such as gout, gravel, scrofula, itch, &c.[1] This is either because they are begotten by parents [511] who are healthy and active, with a humour and blood which are well tempered, or else because they live, as we have described, in perfect harmony and concord, without lawsuits and without quarrelling for the goods of this world. Consequently they never lose their repose and their habitual tranquillity.

They prevent discomforts and diseases by the use of certain emetics, made from a root which is closely like that of chicory, or from certain seeds which they gather on the trees, and which they steep ten or twelve hours in a dish of bark filled with water or with broth.[2] The sweat-house, however,

[1] The good health of the Indians is also mentioned by our author at page 394 of his book.

[2] In all probability, as I am told by my friend, Professor Henry Kraemer of Philadelphia, an authority upon pharmacognosy, this root, closely like that of chicory, was that of a species of Milkweed (*Asclepias*), several of which are known to furnish emetics. The identity of the seeds is not so clear. They may have been those of the Leatherwood (*Dirca palustris*) the bark of which, and therefore probably the seeds, is known to yield an emetic; but they were more likely those of the Black Alder (*Ilex verticillata*), the berries of which probably share the emetic property known to exist strongly in those of other species of the same genus.

is the great remedy of the Gaspesians ; and it can be stated as a fact that a number of the French have also [512] found therein a cure for chronic inflammations and sufferings which seem incurable in France. The sweat-house is a kind of a hot room, built in the form of a little wigwam covered with bark, or with skins of beaver and moose, and so arranged that it has no opening whatever. In the middle thereof the Indians place some hot stones, which heat those inside so much that the water soon starts from all parts of their bodies. They throw water upon those hot stones, whence the steam rises to the top of the wigwam, then it falls upon their backs, much like a hot and burning rain. This continues until some of them, unable to endure this heat, are obliged to rush out as quickly as they can.

[513] This proceeding, which serves to torment some of them, is nevertheless a matter of amusement to others, who take a particular pleasure in throwing water from time to time upon the stones, in order to see who will have most endurance. They even sing and joke among themselves, giving vent to their usual whoops. Then, rushing quickly from this wigwam, they throw themselves into the river in order to cool themselves. This would, without doubt, cause serious illness, and even death itself, to people less robust than our Gaspesians, who set to eating with unequalled avidity immediately after they have issued from the sweat-house and the river.[1]

They are great lovers of blood-letting ; they even open [514] their veins themselves with flint stones or the points of their knives. If any swelling makes its appearance, either on arm or leg, they lance the places where the evil is, and they make several incisions with the same instruments in order

[1] This use of the sweat-house was very widespread among the American Indians, and is mentioned by many early writers. A detailed and interesting account thereof is given by Denys (*Description*, II. 394), and Diéreville also describes it (*Voyage*, 184) with some differences of detail.

more readily to suck out the foul blood, and to remove all its corruption.

The balsam of the fir, which some call turpentine, and which is a kind of sovereign balm for every kind of sore and for wounds of axe, knife, or gun, is the first and most usual remedy which our Gaspesians employ, and with success, in making their very fine cures. Since this balsam is a little too irritating to the [515] patients, they have the ingenuity to temper its activity by masticating the pellicle which is found attached to the fir after they have removed the outer bark. They spit the water which comes from it upon the affected part, and make of the remainder a kind of a poultice, which alleviates the evil and cures the wounded man in a very short time.

They have, moreover, a quantity of roots and herbs which are unknown to us in Europe, but whose virtues and properties the Indians know wonderfully well, so that they can make use of them in time of need.

The Gaspesians, all of them together, men, women, girls, and boys, use tobacco.[1] They consider, esteem, and regard it as a kind of manna which has come to them [516] from Heaven, since Papkootparout gave the first use thereof to the Gaspesian people, as we have noted in the chapter on their belief concerning the immortality of the soul.[2] In fact tobacco, which they call *tamahoé*,[3] seems to them absolutely essential to enable them to endure the misfortunes of human life. It diverts them in their voyages, gives them wisdom in their councils, decides upon peace and war; it satisfies their hunger, serving both for drink and food; and when any one is dangerously ill, they still hope to see the sick person again in his original health provided that he can still

[1] The words in the original are *prennent du tabac*, which in modern parlance would mean "take snuff." Yet it seems very plain that our author means simply that they smoked tobacco.

[2] In Chapter XII. and especially page 319.

[3] In modern Micmac *Tamawā* (Rand, *English-Micmac Dictionary*, 266).

smoke tobacco, while the contrary is a sure indication that he will die.

[517] If the herbs, the decoctions, and the usual remedies are not sufficiently efficacious to cure the Gaspesians, the friends of those who are ill do not hesitate to call in the aid of the Bouhine, that is to say the Juggler, who blows all over them, and especially upon the affected part, in order to chase out the germ, or the Devil, which is tormenting him. He makes the usual invocations, contortions, and cries, in the manner we have already described in speaking of the superstitions of these Indians.[1]

There is no one, however, more to be pitied than the sick persons, who endure without complaint the hubbub, the noise, and the fuss of the juggler and of those in the wigwam. It seems indeed that our Gaspesians, [518] who in other respects seem sufficiently humane and kindly, are lacking in regard to charity and consideration for their sick. It can in fact be said that they do not know how to take care of them, nor how to prepare food which would be good for them ; they give them indifferently everything which they desire, both to drink and to eat, and whenever they ask it. They take the sick persons along, and carry or embark them with themselves on their voyages when there is any appearance of recovery. But if the recovery of the sick man is wholly despaired of, so that he can no more eat, drink, nor smoke, they sometimes break his head, as much to relieve the suffering he endures as to save themselves [519] the trouble which they have in taking him everywhere with them.

Nor have they any better idea what it means to comfort a poor invalid, and from the moment when he no longer eats or smokes any more tobacco, or when he loses speech, they abandon him entirely, and never speak to him a single word of tenderness or of comfort. This is because these

[1] In Chapter XIII. beginning at page 329, where the jugglers are somewhat fully discussed.

barbarians think it an altogether useless trouble to speak to a person who cannot reply, and who is preparing for the voyage to join his compatriots and his ancestors in the Land of Souls. Hence it comes about that very often persons die without any of those in the wigwam taking any notice of them, though these preserve, nevertheless [520] during all the time of the agony, a profound silence, and show in their look of consternation the affliction and grief which they feel at this sorrowful separation.

When the dying person has drawn his last breath, the relatives and friends of the deceased cover his body with a fine skin of elk, or a robe of beaver. In this he is enshrouded and bound with cords of leather or bark in such a manner that the chin touches the knees and the feet the back.[1] Hence it comes about that their graves are quite round, of the form of a well, and four to five feet deep. Meanwhile the leading person and the chiefs give directions that the bark of the wigwam of the dead man be struck, [521] the words *Oué*, *Oué*, *Oué*, being said for the purpose of making the soul come forth. Then certain young Indians are appointed to go and announce to all the people, and even to the French settlements, the death of their relatives and friends. These deputies approach the wigwams to which they are sent, climb into a tree, and cry out three times with all their strength that such an Indian is dead. After this they approach, and give to those whom they find an account of the circumstances of the illness and of the death of their friend, inviting them to assist in his funeral, which is celebrated in the following fashion.

Everybody having assembled at the wigwam of the de-

[1] This method of placing the body for burial was in wide use among our Indians. It was determined by analogy with the position the body occupied just before coming into the world, in its mother's womb. Circular Micmac graves, of aboriginal age have been found at Tracadie, New Brunswick, by the late Dr. A. C. Smith, as he has informed me.

ceased, the body is carried to the general burial-place of the [522] nation. It is placed in the grave and covered with bark and with the finest skins. It is adorned also with branches of fir and sprigs of cedar, and finally they add thereto everything which the deceased has been accustomed to use. If it was a man, they add his bow, arrows, spear, club, gun, powder, lead, porringer, kettle, snowshoes, &c.; if it was a woman, her collar for use in dragging the sled or in carrying wood, her axe, knife, blanket, necklaces of wampum and of beads, and her tools used for ornamenting and painting the clothes, as well as the needles for sewing the canoes and for lacing the snowshoes. The grave is then filled with earth, and upon it is placed a quantity of logs [523] elevated three or four feet in the form of a mausoleum, upon which appears a fine cross, that is, if the deceased is one of our Cross-bearer Gaspesians. The burial is made in silence, whilst the chief and the old men form a circle around the grave, and the women weep and make mournful cries. These cease at the command of the chief, who invites all the Gaspesians to the feast of death, at which he sets forth in his address the good qualities and the most notable deeds of the deceased. He even impresses upon all the assembly, by words as touching as they are forceful, the uncertainty of human life, and the necessity they are under of dying in order to join in the Land of Souls [524] their friends and relatives, whom they now are recalling to memory. He stops a moment, then suddenly assumes an expression more bright and less sad, and orders the distribution of the things prepared for the feast, which is followed by the usual dances and songs.[1] The relatives and the friends of the deceased, however, go into mourning, that is to say, they smear their faces with black, and cut the end of their hair; it is not permissible for them to wear this in tresses, nor to adorn it with strings of beadwork and of wampum

[1] An account of a particular funeral oration is given by our author at page 261 of his book.

during the period that they are in mourning, which lasts a year altogether.

If an Indian dies during the winter at some place remote from the common burial-place of his ancestors, [525] those of his wigwam enwrap him with much care in barks painted red and black, place him upon the branches of some tree on the bank of a river, and build around him with logs a kind of little fort, for fear lest he be torn by wild beasts or birds of prey. In the spring the chief sends the young men to fetch the body, and it is received with the same ceremonies which have just been described.[1]

Our Gaspesians have never burned the bodies of their dead, as did our ancient Gauls, who burned with theirs everything these had cared for, even to their papers and their obligations, perhaps with the [526] expectation that they would take proceedings, pay, and demand their debts in the other world. I have learned only this from our Indians, that the chiefs of their nation formerly entrusted the bodies of the dead to certain old men, who carried them sacredly to a wigwam built on purpose in the midst of the woods, where they remained for a month or six weeks. They opened the head and the belly of the dead person, and removed therefrom the brain and the entrails ; they removed the skin from the body, cut the flesh into pieces, and, having dried it in the smoke or in the sun, they placed it at the foot of the dead man, to whom they gave back his skin, which they fitted on very much as if the flesh had not been removed.

[527] It is only a very short time ago that, in the Isle of Tisniguet,[2] a noted place and an ancient cemetery of the Gas-

[1] The mortuary customs of the Micmacs, with variations in detail, are described by all of our writers from Champlain onwards. Denys has much to say of them (*Description*, II. 448).

[2] Now called Heron Island. It lies in the south-western part of Bay Chaleur. Its identity is made certain by Father Jumeau's map (at page 11 in this book), and by the fact, which I personally know, that the Micmacs call it by this name, in the form *Tesanegek*, or *Tesneguk*, to this day. I am informed

pesians of Ristigouche, we found in the woods a grave built in the form of a box, containing a quantity of skins of beavers and of moose, some arrows, bows, wampum, beadwork, and other trinkets. These had been buried by the Indians with the dead person, in the thought which possessed them, that the spirits of all these articles would bear him company and do him service in the Land of Souls.

by Mr. J. A. D. Robertson, the Light-keeper on the Island, that an Indian camping ground occurs at the west end of the Island, but no burial-place of the Indians is known to any of the residents.

[528] CHAPTER XXI

*First Return of the Author to France, and the Speech that the Chief of the Gaspesians made to Him on his Departure.*

FOR six consecutive years I had cultivated the Gaspesian mission, which obedience had committed to my care, when the Reverend Father Valentin le Roux,[1] our Provincial Commissary and Superior, who devoted all his attention and employed with success the ardours of his zeal for the glory of God, the service of the colony, and the progress of our missions, sent me to France.[2] This he did because he recognised perfectly well the absolute necessity [529] we were under for having an hospice at Quebec for the comfort of our missionaries. Also he was strongly solicited by the principal residents of Mont-Roïal to establish in that beautiful isle, at the will and pleasure and with the consent of Messieurs of the Seminary of Saint Sulpice, who are the seigneurs and proprietors of it, a House of Recollects. And besides, he wished to seek possible methods of rendering fixed and sedentary the missions which we had among the French and the Indians, in order that we might humanise these peoples, settle them with us, employ them at the cultivation

[1] Father Valentin le Roux (or Leroux), of whom there is important mention earlier in our author's book (page 279), came to Canada, as Commissaire Provincial of the Recollects, in 1677, succeeding Father Potentien Ozon, and remained in that capacity until 1681. He died in Paris in 1708, aged sixty-six years. (Data supplied by Fathers Hugolin and Odoric.)

[2] This journey was made in the year 1680, as shown by data given in a note on page 321 of this volume (compare also the Introduction, page 7). It must have been in the summer that our author left Isle Percée, since he speaks, three pages later (532), of the salmon fishery as then in progress. This fishery of course is made in spring and summer, not in autumn.

of the land, bring them into submission to our laws and customs, and make true Christians of them after having made them well-mannered, [530] law-abiding, and tractable men. For these reasons Father le Roux considered it suitable to send the Reverend Father Exuper de Thunes[1] and myself into France with letters to the very Reverend Father Germain Allart, since Bishop of Vences, in order to obtain from the King, and from Messieurs of Saint Sulpice, the substance of the petition and of the instructions which he placed in our hands.

We embarked for this purpose in the vessel named the *Sainte-Anne*, and we arrived safely at Isle Percée, after seven weeks[2] of a vexatious and arduous navigation, caused by three dreadful tempests, of which the last came near to making us founder among the Sept Isles.

As I was wholly convinced of the sincere affection [531] which the Gaspesians had for me, and as they supposed that I was once more to spend the winter with them in the woods, I believed that I ought to entrust the secret, and to make the announcement of my intention to return to France, to that one of the Indians who called himself my father, and of whom I called myself the son, since the time when he had "given me birth" in the midst of the usual feasts of the Gaspesian nation with the corresponding ceremony.[3] It would be really difficult for me to express to you the consternation which the

[1] Father de Thunes is mentioned earlier in our author's book, at page 22. After his return to Canada he became, in 1683, vicaire of the monastery of the Recollects at Quebec and in 1684 Commissaire Provincial. He returned to France in 1685 and died in 1692. (Data supplied by Fathers Hugolin and Odoric.) Our author eulogises him in his other book (*Premier Etablissement de la Foy*).

[2] It seems hardly credible that they were seven weeks on the way from Quebec to Isle Percée; yet that is the statement of the text. It is not a misprint or an author's slip for seven days, for that length of time would be in no wise remarkable, as the length of this voyage evidently was in the mind of the author.

[3] A matter mentioned earlier, on page 501 of our author's book.

news caused in the mind of this barbarian, who, by the change in his colour, and by the grief and sadness which appeared all at once in his countenance, soon made me know that he was keenly touched by [532] the resolution in which I appeared to him to be, of embarking in the first ships of our fishermen. He left me gruffly, contrary to his habit, and entered into the woods, perhaps to conceal the tears which commenced to flow from his eyes. He came out thence some time after, and thought well to send one of his children, with two or three young Indians, to carry the news of my departure to the Gaspesians who were at the salmon fishery, and to invite them all to assemble at once with him in order to bid me adieu. He ordered these deputies not to approach their wigwams except with the same ceremonies which they invariably observe when they go to announce the death [533] of some one of their prominent persons,[1] because they considered that I was going to die, so far as they were concerned, and they would never see me again.

The promptitude with which all these Indians, baptized and non-baptized, assembled at Isle Percée, added to the affection which these barbarians testified to me, in imploring me, all of them together, not to abandon them, made me waver some time in the resolution I had taken to depart ; and I confess to you frankly, that as my own heart was keenly touched with compassion, it was certainly nothing other than the merits of obedience, ordering me to embark in the first fishing vessels for the good of our missions, which [534] succeeded in deciding me to go back to France.

The little band of our Gaspesians whom I had baptized came at early morning to the Chapel, some to be confessed, others to have themselves instructed, several in order to ask me for the *Oukateguennes Kignamatinoër*[2] (some instructive

[1] This ceremony is described by our author at page 521 of his book.

[2] This Micmac name for the instructive papers prepared by our author is explained in a note under page 130 of his book (page 126 of this volume).

papers for praying to God), and all to hear the Holy Mass, and my speech. It is thus that they called the exhortation which I made to them for the purpose of encouraging them to practise faithfully that which I had taught them. The words of which Samuel made use in old time, when he retired from the leadership of the people of Israel in giving them a King, and those of the Apostle, when, on his departure for Jerusalem, he [535] called upon Heaven and Earth to witness to the zeal which he had taken to announce to the Ephesians the Gospel of the Lord, were nearly the same as those of which I made use to good effect in taking leave of my Indians, who all promised to remain faithful to God. I embraced them tenderly after my thank-offering, during which the men and the women intoned and chanted alternately the spiritual canticles which I had taught them, with a harmony of voice so sweet and so pleasing[1] that our French were sensibly edified thereby.

As I had been given some fathoms of Brazilian tobacco, and since I still possessed about a dozen [536] little mirrors, knives, needles, and other trifles, which they esteem as much as we do gold and silver, I took much pleasure in distributing these to them, imploring them affectionately to receive the things as the faithful and sincere pledges of my friendship. Three sailors, who came to our chapel on behalf of their captain in order to carry our little baggage into their ship, were about to put an end to our conversation, when the Chief of our Gaspesians begged me with much earnestness not to permit these men to render me this service, because the Indians wished to have the honour and the glory of it, in order, said he to me, to demonstrate to all the French how much [537] esteem and affection they had for me. He named at once six young hunters, whom they

[1] Our author has earlier mentioned the pleasing voices of the Indians, on page 506 of his book.

call *Iarbasou*[1]; and although everything in my possession amounted only to a little mattress, a blanket, and a casket which contained the ornaments of our portable chapel, they divided it nevertheless ostentatiously between three different canoes, and in these they promptly embarked in order to carry it to the vessel which was ready to set sail.

We departed from the chapel with diverse feelings of grief, because in fact I was no less affected in leaving them than they testified they were in losing me. It was necessary nevertheless that we should part [538], so that I might join our French who were waiting for me to go on board, and I was extremely surprised when, whilst taking leave of Messieurs the Captains who were remaining at Isle Percée, the Chief of our Gaspesians parted the crowd, approached me, and appeared in the midst of the assembly with a face all dismayed with grief and sadness. He raised his eyes towards Heaven and lowered them towards the earth several times, and with sighs pronounced these words, *Akaia*, *akaia*,[2] which indicate ordinarily the bitterness and the displeasure which they have in their hearts. He took me by the hand, and regarding me fixedly with eyes ready to burst into tears, he addressed me in these very words—

"Well then, my son, the [539] resolution has been taken; thou wishest to abandon us and return to France. For there lies the great wooden canoe" (pointing out to me the ship in which I was to embark) "which is going to steal thee from the Gaspesians in order to take thee to thine own land, to thy relatives and thy friends. Ah, my son, if thou couldst see my heart at present, thou wouldst see that it weeps tears of blood, at the very time that my eyes are weeping tears of

[1] This word is without doubt the same as the modern Micmac *Ulbadoo*, meaning "a big boy; a bachelor" (Rand, *Micmac Reader*, 27), with the usual substitution of *r* for *l*, and, apparently, with a misprint of *s* for *d* in our author's form.

[2] These words mean Alas! alas! Compare their explanation earlier under page 148 of our author's book (page 133 of this volume).

water, so much is it affected by this cruel separation." He stopped short, and said not a word, in accordance with the custom and method of the Indians, who act this way, either for the sake of reflecting upon that which they have to say, or else in order to give leisure and time to their listeners to examine and to approve or [540] reject that which they have advanced. "I say, what now, my son?" added he, "Is it possible that thou hast lost so soon the recollection of the feast which thou gavest us once at Gaspé, the first time that thou camest to live in our wigwams, when, having formed, with flour kneaded in the fat and marrow of moose, as many hearts of paste as we were of Gaspesians, thou arrangedst them in the same bark plate, desiring to persuade us that the largest of these hearts, which covered and concealed all the others, was the representation of thine own, whose zeal and charity enclosed within itself all the hearts of the Indians, neither more nor less than mothers enclose their children in their wombs?[1] Thou wast [541] sorry, thou saidst, that nature had given thee but a single one to divide, but this thou didst wish to multiply as much as lay in thy power, through the distribution that thou madest to us of these hearts of paste while speaking to each one of us individually these loving words: *Tahoé nkamera mon ignemoulo:* 'My brother, I give thee my heart;' *nkameramon achkou oüiguidepcheup;*[2] 'you will encamp, you will lodge, and you will dwell for the future in my heart, which desires to become like yours, through the union of a mutual and reciprocal friendship, wholly Indian and wholly Gaspesian.' Scarcely hadst thou finished thy speech, which succeeded in gaining for thee the hearts of Gaspesia, when all began to talk of dances and of feasts [542] to be made for the purpose of expressing to thee the keen joy

[1] This feast was described by our author at page 498 of his book.

[2] These words are a repetition, with variations, of those given by our author on page 500 of his book, where their meaning is explained in a note (page 289 of this volume).

that we had in the gift which thou hadst made us ; and, amidst the universal acclamations of all our wigwams, each one endeavoured to express through the songs which were chanted to thy praise the good fortune that he had in possessing the heart of the Patriarch. Tell me then now, is this heart no more the same to-day as of yore ? Has it then become wholly French, and is it no more at all Gaspesian ? Or, indeed, does it wish to throw forth the Indians for ever, after having welcomed and tenderly loved them ?" He stopped for the second time. "If some one of us," he said to me, continuing in a louder and more imperious tone of voice, "has caused thee any [543] displeasure, which perhaps obliges thee to leave us, dost thou not know my son, that I am thy father, and the Chief of the Gaspesian nation ? And as I am thy father, thou canst not be ignorant thus far of the sincerity of my friendship. I assure thee that I will even love thee always as tenderly as one of my own children. As I am Chief of the Indians, thou knowest well that I have the power and the means at hand to have the guilty person punished if thou wilt denounce him to me. Or, if thou hast the intention to conceal him, in agreement with the maxims and the rules of the charity that thou hast taught us, take, my son, these robes of beaver, of otter, and of marten which we willingly offer thee for the purpose of wiping away and effacing the annoyance which [544] has been caused thee, and the indignation which thou mayest have conceived against us."

He caused in fact some of these furs to be thrown at my feet by two young Indians, but seeing that I refused these presents he said—"It is true that thou hast always scorned them. The little value thou hast placed upon them, whilst the French seek them with so much eagerness, has long made us know that thou desirest nothing in the world but the salvation of our souls, and that we were too poor, and would never be rich enough to repay worthily the troubles and the labours which thou devotest to the effort to make us live like

true Christians. But if the little we possess has not enough attraction to lead [545] thee to remain among us, it is necessary my son, that I open to thee my heart; and I must ask of thee to-day, in presence of the Sun which shines upon us—must we believe that which thou hast taught us, or need we not believe it? Answer now and speak."

You will please take note, that the Indians never interrupt the one who is speaking, and they condemn, with reason, those dialogues, and those indiscreet and irregular conversations, where each one of the company wishes to give his ideas without having the patience to listen to those of the others. It is, accordingly, for this reason that they compare us to ducks and geese, which cry out, say they, and which talk all together like the French. It is necessary [546] to wait until they have finished all that they have to say, and until they require you to answer them. Thus did this speaker, who expected me to answer.

In a few words I testified to him that I had only taught them that which the Son of God had taught to all Christians, and that therefore it was not enough merely to believe him through the respectful submission which one ought to have for his commandments, but that also it was necessary to observe them religiously, and even to die if necessary for the truth and defence of his Holy Gospel.

"If it is thus," replied the Indian, "one of two things is true. Either thou art a liar, or thou art not a good Christian. *Ouce choüen tahoé.*[1] Thou art a liar, [547] my brother, if everything thou hast taught us is not true. Or thou art not a good Christian, because thou dost not observe, as is needful, the commandments of JESUS. For in fact, and

[1] The equivalent of this expression in modern Micmac is fairly plain. Rand gives *Owsooōgŭn*, as meaning "a lie," and *Kĕsnŭkwŏn'* as a particularly emphatic word for "liar" (*English-Micmac Dictionary*, 157). *Ouce choüen* seems to involve the first part of the former word, and the last part of the latter. *Tahoé* means "friend," as explained earlier under page 477 (page 277 of this volume).

I wish every one to hear me, thou hast said to our children that they were bound, under penalty of being burned in Hell, to honour their fathers and their mothers, and that it was a monstrous crime to abandon their parents, and to refuse them the aid which they had a right to expect from their children in their need. Thy instructions and the commandment of God which says, *Koutche, kitche chibar, chaktou, baguisto skiginouidex*,[1] 'Honour and fear thy father and thy mother and thou shalt live long,' have kept my eldest son in my wigwam, who, nevertheless, [548] wanted to abandon me in the middle of winter, in our greatest need. He has killed a great number of moose, he has made thee fare well and has given thee abundantly of the grease to eat, and of the oil of bear to drink in our feasts, as much of it as thou hast been able to desire. Frenchman! here is another argument; my eldest son has remained with his father and mother because of the respect which he had for the commandment of JESUS, and the friendship which he bore for the Patriarch. Do then now, after his example, for me, for my wife, and for him, that which he has done so generously for thee. Thou callest me thy father; my wife, saidst thou to all the Indians, was thy mother; ever since we both had given thee birth[2] in our [549] wigwams, my children were thy brothers and thy children. Well now! is it then a good deed for a child to leave his father, his

[1] The equivalents of these words (which occur again two pages later), in modern Micmac, as nearly as I can trace them in Rand's *English-Micmac Dictionary*, are as follows: *koutche* is obviously *kooch*, meaning "thy father" (107), and *kitche* with the preceding *e* is the same as *ŭkech'*, meaning "thy mother" (173); *chibar* evidently is *chepălk'* (with the usual change of *r* to *l*) meaning "to fear" (107); *chaktou* seems to involve a root of *ăjikpumāe*, meaning "honourable" (133); *baguisto* seems related to *pegedowse*, meaning "to live long" (161); while *skiginouidex* I cannot identify more nearly than to suggest that it is connected with the *oüiguidex*, meaning "to encamp," of the expression on page 500 of our author's book. The entire phrase would then read, "Thy father, thy mother, fear, honour; long wilt thou encamp."

[2] A matter which is explained earlier in a note on page 290 of the present volume.

mother, his brothers, and his sisters? Is it thus that thou despisest the commandment of God which says, *Koutche, kitche chibar, chaktou, baguisto skinouidex?* If it is true that the children who honour their parents live long, art thou not in fear of perishing in the great lake, and of suffering shipwreck in these salt waters after having abandoned us in the need that we have for thine aid? Alas, my son," added this Indian, with tears in his eyes, "if some one of us comes to die in the woods, who will take care to show us the road to Heaven, and to [550] aid us to die aright? Was it then needful to take so much trouble to instruct us, as thou hast done up to the present, only to leave us in an evident peril of dying without the sacraments which thou hast administered to my brother, my uncle, and several of our dying old men? If thy heart remains still insensible to everything I have said, learn, my son, that mine sheds and weeps tears of blood in abundance so great that it chokes my utterance." It was thus that he finished his speech, and he then gave me the opportunity to declare my feelings to him.

All of the company was as much surprised as myself by such a discourse, which I had not expected, and they were uneasy to know [551] what I would answer this poor Indian, who pretended to be my father. I made him understand and told him that my heart was shedding more tears of blood than his own, because it alone by itself was more sensible of our common separation than all the hearts of the Indians together: that I had never received any displeasure from the Gaspesian nation, which had always strongly bound me, by the friendly acts and the good they had done me, to remain with them, and to prefer their mission, as I should always if occasion were to present itself, above all those which could be given me in New France; that I recognised him still as my father as much as ever and more, and that I begged him also with all [552] my heart, to consider me ever as his son:

that they must observe religiously everything which I had taught them as to the duty of children towards their fathers and mothers, expressed in the fourth commandment of God, *Koutche, kitche chibar, chaktou, &c.*; that far from practising the contrary in respect to them, I was only returning to France for the purpose of putting it more effectively into practice, since I was going in order to obey God in the person of my Superior, who held with me the place of a father, and in the design of persuading some of my brothers to come and instruct them; and that I was not abandoning them in their need without succour, since I was leaving them another myself in the person [553] of Reverend Father Claude Moreau,[1] who was extremely zealous for their salvation. I added that to everything he had said to me I had listened quietly, though more as a result of his friendship than of the outrageous reproach which he had wished to make me after having loved them so tenderly, but that in fact I could not forbear to testify to him that my heart had been touched to the quick when he asked me whether it was no longer Gaspesian, and if it wished to throw forth the Indians for ever. "Thou deceivest thyself, my father," said I in a rather severe tone of voice, "my heart is more

[1] Father Moreau is mentioned also earlier in our author's book (pages 145, 182). He was evidently not at Isle Percée at this time, for according to documents cited in Raymond's *History of the River St. John* (St. John, 1905), page 140, he was on the Saint John on July 7 of that year (1680). He was also on that river in May and June of the next year (1681), and it would seem likely therefore that he simply visited the Gaspesians during the winter of 1680–81. Fathers Hugolin and Odoric inform me that he had been empowered by the Bishop of Quebec to serve as missionary on the River Saint John, on the same day that Father le Clercq was granted this privilege for Isle Percée (*Archives of the Bishop's Palace, Quebec*, Reg. A., fol. 92). There is mention of his labours on the Saint John, though apparently with some error as to the dates, in l'Abbe Casgrain's *Les Sulpiciens et les Prêtres des Missions Etrangères en Acadie* (Quebec, 1897, I. 213, 26, 49). His service among the Micmacs is mentioned in the note on page 132 of this volume. He died at Nemours in France, 14th October 1703, aged sixty-six years, and forty-nine in religion. (*Table générale des Recollets de St. Denys*, MS. mentioned on page 10 of this volume).

Gaspesian than ever, and at the very time that thou imaginest it is shrinking, it is becoming larger from day to day that it may embrace and [554] receive within it all those of thy nation. It would wish, this heart, to multiply itself so as to be found in every place where the Gaspesians resort, in order to instruct them; and I assure thee that I return to France only with the intention in mind of doing on my return, through the help of our missionaries, that which it was impossible for me to accomplish all by myself. Then thou wilt confess that my heart is much larger than thou thinkest, and that, far from casting forth and rejecting the Indians, it would cease to live if it were for a moment without affection for the Gaspesians."

"If it is thus," answered in the same instant a certain *Nemidoüades*, "it is necessary that I go to France with the Patriarch. He is right, he has sense, and [555] we have not so much of it as he. He only seeks our salvation. But I wish that we embark ourselves in different ships, in order that if one of us comes to perish the other can save himself, in order to carry the news thereof, something which would be impossible if we both were shipwrecked in the same vessel." He was going to say something else when the captain notified us that it was time to start.

Our Indians remained on the shore of the sea during our embarkation, and I declare to you that I had keen distress when, with a telescope, I viewed our poor Gaspesians, who remained constantly in the same place where I had left them until [556] our ship rounded the Pointe au Loup-marin on the Isle de Bonaventure, which we left between us and the main land, and deprived me of the satisfaction of seeing them, and of being seen by them.

The voyage was alike short and fortunate, so that we arrived at Honfleur thirty days after our departure from Isle Percée. Then we took the route to Paris, where the Very Reverend Father Germain Allart, and the Very Reverend

Father Potentien Ozon,[1] the Provincial at that time of the Recollects of Artois, managed with so much success the affairs of our missions that the former obtained from the King the establishment of the Hospice which we now have at Quebec, and the latter obtained letters of recommendation [557] from Monsieur Tronçon, Superior of Messieurs of the Seminary of Saint Sulpice, to Monsieur d'Ollier, Superior of Messieurs of the Seminary of Mont-Roïal in Canada, in virtue of which my said Sieur d'Ollier had the goodness to grant us generously a space of land on the border of the river, with power to build there a mission house, with the consent of Monseigneur the Bishop, for the spiritual consolation of the residents of Mont-Roïal.

Whilst these reverend Fathers were working in concert to obtain these new establishments, obedience permitted me to return to our dear Province of Artois, where everybody, so to say, relatives, friends, religious [558] and seculars, exerted their efforts in order to prevent, and to make me abandon, the intention I had formed of returning to Canada. Perhaps I should have yielded to the entreaties of these persons, who sought in my residence in France only their own personal satisfaction, if the very Reverend Father Potentien Ozon, who had twice gone to this new world in the capacity of Commissioner and Superior of our Canadian missions, had not dissipated all of these obstacles by one of his letters. He informed me that all the difficulties I had laid before him were unreasonable, and that it was not a question of ascertaining the will of God upon an affair in which it seemed perfectly evident in the will of the Superiors of the [559] two Provinces of Saint Denis and Saint Antoine, but rather of executing it as soon as possible, inasmuch as

[1] Father Ozon had been Commissaire Provincial of the Recollects in Canada in 1675 and in 1676–77, which will explain his interest in this matter. He is also mentioned earlier in our author's book, at page 22. Our author eulogises him in his other book (*Premier Etablissement de la Foy*).

Monseigneur the Bishop of Quebec and the Reverend Father Valentin le Roux, Superior of our missions, were insisting on my return to Canada.

Nothing further was needed to decide me to make a sacrifice of all the reluctance which I could have in leaving a second time our dear Province. Wholly convinced that the spirit of the Lord resided in this great servant of God, I received his letter and his advice as the decision of my lot, and, in order not to be exposed longer to the assaults which the natural friendship of relatives and friends constantly directed against me [560] for the sake of inducing me to remain in the country, I left Bapaume and went to Arras, to make there my annual retreat and to prepare myself for the second voyage I was to make into New France. It seems that God approved of my sacrifice, since the one of our religious who up to that time had been opposed to my return, found himself, eight days after my departure, completely changed; and he begged so earnestly to come with me to Canada, that the Superiors yielded to his insistent prayers. This news was so much the more pleasing to me since I was convinced of the ability and the virtue of this religious, and of the great good he would do. This, indeed, he has done in the French [561] and Iroquois Missions, where he has laboured during six years with a singular edification.

I wrote at once to our Superiors concerning the matter, and informed them of the resolution of the Reverend Father François Wasson, who wished to go with me to Canada. Indeed we set out immediately from Bapaume for Paris, where I had the honour to receive the visit of Monsieur Macé, a very worthy ecclesiastic of Saint Sulpice, a man of supreme virtue and of a truly apostolic zeal for the mission of New France, who begged me urgently to take with me two Hospitaliere nuns of Beaufort in Vallée, whom Monseigneur d'Angers wished to confide to my care as far as

Quebec. However unworthy [562] I thought myself of the care and guidance of these two holy women, he made me, nevertheless, consent to his request, and he did not leave our residence until he had obtained our promise that we would go to the convent of these good nuns and give them notice of the time at which they ought to go to La Rochelle in order to embark in the first ships. Thus, everything being arranged, we set out from Paris and arrived happily, about the Feast of Pentecost, at the Hospitalieres of Beaufort en Vallée. The Reverend Mother des Roseaux, whom Mademoiselle de Melun, so celebrated through the practice of the most eminent virtues of Christianity, had placed in this holy Monastery, [563] had become its Superior. Animated by the examples of piety of her saintly mistress, and burning with this same fire of charity for her neighbour which consumed the heart of that great princess, she made a sacrifice for the poor invalids of Mont-Roïal of her two dear and beloved daughters, the Sisters Gallard and Monmusseau, the first the daughter of a councillor of Angers, the second of a famous merchant. As these two nuns were of assured virtue, and fortified by the spirit of God which was conducting them into Canada, it seemed accordingly as if they only issued from the cloister in order to give shining evidences of it, whether during the sojourn they made at La Rochelle, where Monseigneur the Bishop [564] received them as true spouses of JESUS CHRIST, or during the voyage, which our Lord rendered very fortunate through the prayers and sanctity of these religious souls, who made their mental orisons and their spiritual readings, and recited their office in common, as if the ship had become for them another convent of Beaufort en Vallée. They seemed oblivious to all the discomforts which are usual on the sea, but they were unable to keep from shuddering and trembling, as chaste souls, when they feared that we were in danger of being soon attacked by a Turkish ship, which came down

full sail upon us, either to capture our ship [565] or to send her to the bottom. The cannon which were made ready, the muskets, the pikes, the powder, and the lead which were distributed to all the passengers with some precipitation, did not affright them. Uncertain what would happen if the Turks, who were visibly approaching us, made themselves masters of the ship, they feared only for their purity ; and, bravely preferring death to the loss of this precious treasure, which ran risk of being exposed to the insults and the violence of these enemies of the Christian name, they threw themselves upon their knees to implore the aid of Heaven, and begged me, with an extraordinary fervour of spirit, to approve the resolution which they [566] had formed, of throwing themselves into the sea so soon as the Turks mounted into the vessel. For they preferred, said they, to abandon themselves to the loving care of Providence, and to die a thousand times rather than to fall into the hands of these Turks and be sullied by their brutality. Heaven, however, was content with their good will. Everything was put into condition to resist the Turkish ship, which approached within cannon shot of our vessel ; and as she was a much better sailer than we, it was decided to await her and to place ourselves in condition to attack her and to defend ourselves. This firmness, and the resolution which we displayed in wishing to fight the enemy, struck terror into these barbarians ; [567] and they, supposing that we had a much larger crew than appeared on the deck, feared for the success of a combat in which they began to lose hope of conquering and triumphing. They thought best not to risk it, changed their tack, passed in rear of our vessel, and contented themselves with making threats against us, to which answer was made with a vigour not at all inferior to their insults. When these infidels were so distant that their vessel was lost to our view, we chanted the *Te Deum* as a thanksgiving. This happy success was attributed to the

merits and the fervent prayers of these good nuns [568] whom Heaven consoled in the continuation of the voyage by a journey as fortunate as they could hope for, and which brought us to the mouth of the River Saint Lawrence thirty days after our departure from La Rochelle.

The wind being from day to day very favourable, we soon cast anchor opposite Quebec, to which I betook myself in a canoe in order to inform Monseigneur de Laval, First Bishop of Quebec, and Messieurs his Grand Vicars, of the happy arrival of our two Hospitaliere nuns, who had bravely exposed their lives to the perils of the sea in order to consecrate themselves wholly to the service of the sick of Mont-Roïal, [569] in the convent and hospital founded by the charity and the liberality of Madame de Bullion. They were received with all possible good welcome and respect. They were conducted to the Ursulines of Quebec, and some days after to Mont-Roïal, by Monsieur Soüart, their director, a great servant of God, whose memory will always be blessed in New France through the renown of his virtue which he radiated there during forty years of missionary labour up to a happy old age.

The Reverend Father Valentin le Roux, who lost no opportunity to promote the establishment of our missions, intended that Father François [570] Wasson should continue the mission which we had among the Iroquois, where this good religious has lived for a space of six years, both in time of peace, and also during the war we have had with those barbarians, to whose insults this zealous missionary was continually exposed. The Reverend Father Superior ordered me also to ascend with him, and to serve as chaplain to Monseigneur the Comte de Frontenac, Governor-General of New France, as far as Mont-Roïal, in order to arrange with Monsieur d'Ollier, Superior of the Seminary and Seigneur of the Island of Mont-Roïal, for a piece of land, which he generously granted us after having [571] read

the letter which I presented to him on behalf of Monsieur Tronçon. On his own account he gave us four arpents of land situated on the margin of the river, near the Chapel of the Holy Virgin and opposite a little elevation on which a mill was built, in a place convenient and very suitable for the landing of canoes and boats. Of this he sent the deed of grant to the Reverend Father Valentin le Roux, as soon as I had returned to Quebec.[1] This was two days before my departure for my mission of our Gaspesians, where he who called himself my father, and his family, received me with the heartiest possible welcome. I omit here the circumstances [572] of this second mission, which I reserve for the *First Establishment of the Faith in New France*.[2]

[1] The deed of gift, containing particulars in full accord with those in our author's narrative, is printed, along with some related documents, by Réveillaud in Le Tac's *Histoire Chronologique*, 220. Its date is October 26, 1681, the correctness of which, as to year at least, is attested by the other documents above mentioned. Our author, therefore, returned from France in the summer of 1681, leaving France, as he shows on page 562, not long after Pentecost. He does not say positively when he went to France, but it is quite evident that he could not have left Canada on a fishing vessel that spring in time to finish his business in France and start to return about Pentecost; and he must therefore have gone from Quebec to France sometime in 1680.

It may be of interest to add that the land thus granted the Recollects was never actually occupied by them, as I am informed by Fathers Hugolin and Odoric. For when, in 1692, they began their establishment at Montreal it was upon another location.

[2] Yet there is no mention of this second mission in that book, for the reasons, no doubt, which are given on page 21 of the Introduction to the present volume.

THE END

From the Press of Laurent Rondet.

# NOUVELLE RELATION DE LA GASPESIE,

QUI CONTIENT

Les Mœurs & la Religion des Sauvages Gaspesiens Porte-Croix, adorateurs du Soleil, & d'autres Peuples de l'Amerique Septentrionale, dite le Canada.

DEDIE'E A MADAME LA
PRINCESSE D'EPINOY,

*Par le Pere* CHRESTIEN LE CLERCQ,
*Missionnaire Recollet de la Province de Saint Antoine de Pade en Artois, & Gardien du Convent de Lens.*

A PARIS,
Chez AMABLE AUROY, ruë Saint Jacques, à l'Image S. Jerôme, attenant la Fontaine S. Severin.

M. DC. XCI.
*AVEC PRIVILEGE DU ROY.*

# A MADAME LA PRINCESSE D'EPINOY.

*MADAME,*

NE *soïez pas surprise, si je prens la liberté de vous presenter, & de donner au Public, sous les auspices* [ii] *favorables de vôtre illustre Nom, la* Nouvelle Relation de la Gaspesie; *puisqu'elle vous est dûë legitimement, & qu'il est également de son devoir & de sa reconnoissance, de vous offrir, par l'un de ses Missionnaires, ce qu'elle a de plus religieux devant Dieu, & de considerable devant les hommes, pour s'acquiter aujourd'hui des étroites obligations dont elle est redevable depuis plus d'un siecle, à la pieté de vos Ancêtres, d'avoir été soûmise aux Loix de l'Eglise, & du plus grand Monarque de l'Univers, par les appli-* [iii] *cations de leur zele pour le service de l'Etat & de la Religion.*

*En effet,* MADAME, *la verité de l'Histoire nous apprend, que Monsieur Philippe Chabot, Comte de Buransais & de Chargny, Seigneur de Brion, & Grand Amiral de France, qui vivoit plein d'honneur & de gloire sous le Regne de François Premier; voulant fraïer les routes aux Predicateurs de la Foy, dans un Païs où elle n'avoit jamais été annoncée, donna genereusement à Jacques Cartier avec ses Commissions, trois* [iv] *navires équipez à ses frais & dépens, munis de tout ce qui étoit necessaire pour en faciliter les premieres découvertes, & jetter les fondemens de cette florissante Colonie de la Nouvelle France, que l'on voit aujourd'hui si bien établie dans le Canada; & transpirant dans le cœur de ce fameux Pilote, une partie de cette noble ardeur, si commune & si naturelle à tous ceux de vôtre Maison, d'amplifier & d'étendre la gloire de* JESUS-CHRIST *& de nos Rois, il luy commanda d'y arborer la Croix, les Fleurs-de-lys, & cette ce* [v] *lebre Inscription, qui acquit à la Monarchie Françoise plus de deux mille lieuës de ces vastes Contrées, l'année* 1535. *le sixiéme Juillet, qu'elle parut pour la premiere fois dans la Gaspesie, & peu de jours aprés sur les rivages & les côtes du Fleuve de Saint Laurent, en ces termes:* Franciscus Primus, Dei gratiâ, Rex Francorum, regnat.

*C'est ainsi,* MADAME, *que toute la France est redevable à vôtre auguste Maison, de la conquête de ce nouveau Monde, & que par un effet singulier de la* [vi] *divine Providence, nos Sauvages Gaspesiens virent, avec autant de joie que de surprise, dans leur Païs, une Croix semblable à celle qu'ils adoroient sans la connoître: Ils la figuroient & la portoient religieusement dessus leur chair & dessus leurs habits; elle presidoit dans leurs Conseils, dans leurs Voïages, & dans les Affaires les plus importantes de la Nation: leurs Cimetieres paroissoient plûtôt Chrêtiens, que Barbares, par le nombre de Croix qu'ils faisoient mettre dessus leurs tombeaux; en un mot, c'é-* [vii] *toient,* MADAME, *des Atheniens d'un nouveau Monde, qui rendoient*

*leur hommage & leur adoration à la Croix d'un Dieu qui leur étoit inconnu, dans le tems même que les Princes d'Epinoy & de Melun entreprenoient genereusement les voïages les plus celebres de la Terre-Sainte, avec Saint Loüis & nos autres Rois de France, pour la retirer de l'opprobre où elle étoit parmi ces Nations Infideles, & la faire adorer par tout le Monde.*

*Animez de l'esprit de Saint Paul, ces Grands Hommes,* [viii] MADAME, *ne vouloient point, avec cet Apôtre de* JESUS-CHRIST, *d'autre gloire, que celle qu'ils recherchoient avec empressement dans la Croix du Fils de Dieu : & ne comptant pour rien ni le grand nombre des Victoires qu'ils avoient remportées sur les Ennemis de la Foi, ni ces faits d'Armes heroïques qui leur acquirent le surnom de* Charpentiers, *à cause de la force victorieuse de leur bras, & de la pesanteur de leurs coups ; ils se faisoient principalement honneur de se croiser avec les plus Braves du* [ix] *Roïaume ; portoient publiquement ce sacré Signe de nôtre Salut, comme la marque éclatante de leur Christianisme ; faisoient leur Testament, & disposoient de leur Maison avant leur départ pour la Conquête de la Terre-Sainte, dans le dessein d'y être Martyrs, ou d'y faire regner* JESUS-CHRIST *: c'étoient des Heli, qui mouroient à tout moment de regret, de voir cet Arche d'alliance en la puissance de ces Philistins indomptables ; & ils vouloient enfin, qu'elle fût gravée dessus leur Mausolée, avec les Armes de vôtre* [x] *Maison, pour marquer à toute la Posterité, qu'ils se mettoient encore après la mort sous la protection de la Croix du Fils de Dieu, dont ils avoient durant la vie soûtenu les interêts, avec tant de zele & de gloire.*

*Je passerois,* MADAME, *les bornes d'une Epître, & je reconnois avec plaisir qu'il me faudroit de gros volumes, si je voulois rappeller ici la memoire glorieuse & triomphante de ces Illustres Heros : l'antiquité de leur Noblesse, plus ancienne même que la naissance du Christia-* [xi] *nisme dans nôtre France, au rapport de Gregoire de Tours, qui la fait descendre de ce fameux Aurelian, lequel ménagea le Mariage de Sainte Clotilde & du Roi Clovis, avec tant de sagesse, de conduite & de prudence, que ce grand Prince luy donna pour récompense de cet important service, la Comté de Melun avec ses dépendances : ces pompeuses & magnifiques Alliances de vôtre Maison, avec les Têtes couronnées, & ce qu'il y a de plus Noble & d'Auguste dans l'Europe : la profonde érudition d'un si* [xii] *grand nombre de sçavans Prelats, dont les Lumieres Orthodoxes ont illustré l'Eglise de* JESUS-CHRIST, *& dissipé les tenebres & les erreurs qui vouloient la perdre, ou la corrompre : la Vertu austere & la Sainteté de tant d'Abbesses, qui ont fondé, reformé & santifié les Cloîtres : cette Pieté & cette Misericorde si naturelle & si visible, par la fondation de tant de Convents, d'Eglises, de Chapelles, d'Oratoires & d'Hôpitaux, dotez des biens de vos Ancêtres, & soûtenus,* MADAME, *de vos pro-* [xiii] *pres Liberalitez, à Bethune, à la Bassée, à Abbeville, à Baugé, & dans plusieurs autres endroits du Roïaume.*

*Je serois infini,* MADAME, *& j'ose même dire, avec toute la franchise & la candeur que me donne mon Païs natal, il seroit inutil de faire ici le détail des Actions & des Vertus heroïques de vos Illustres Predecesseurs ; puisqu'il semble que la Nature & la Grace aïent heureusement concouru, pour reünir en vôtre Personne, tout ce que l'une & l'autre leur* [xiv] *avoit donné de Noblesse, de Vivacité d'esprit, de Conduite, de Sagesse, de Courage, de Vertu, de Pieté, de Foi & de Religion, qui paroissent aujourd'hui avec tant d'éclat dans vôtre Illustre Personne, que vous ne vous attirez pas moins de Benedictions, que Mademoiselle de Melun vôtre Sœur en a recûës, en vivant & en mourant en odeur de Sainteté, dans la pratique des Vertus les plus éminentes du Christianisme, sur lesquelles vous prenez plaisir de regler & de former* [xv] *toutes les Actions de vôtre vie.*

*En sorte que s'il m'étoit permis de faire un défi semblable à celuy du Sage, parlant de la Femme Forte, ce seroit,* MADAME, *pour en trouver une qui pût imiter sur Vous, cette grandeur d'Ame & de Zele, qui vous attache inviolablement aux interêts de Dieu, de la Religion & de l'Etat ; cette élevation & cette étenduë de Genie universel, qui ne vous laisse rien penser que de noble : cette Charité sans borne, qui rend vôtre cœur* [xvi] *sensible aux miseres d'autrui ; ouvre vos mains aux liberalitez & aux profusions de vos grandes richesses, pour les soûlager ; fait de vôtre Maison l'azile & le refuge des affligez ; plaide auprés du Roi & des Ministres, en faveur des miserables ; rend vôtre abord facile & aisé aux Grands & aux Petits ; vous porte à faire du bien à tout le Monde ; vous inspire cette Humilité sans bassesse, & cette sainte Fierté sans orgüeil ; & vous donne enfin un Cœur selon le Cœur de Dieu, qui vous merite aujourd'hui, avec tant* [xvii] *de justice, l'estime du plus Grand des Monarques, & la veneration de la Cour.*

*Que vôtre modestie,* MADAME, *ne s'en offense pas : ennemie de la flaterie & de la vanité, l'on sçait que vous ne fondez vôtre Grandeur, que sur ce qui peut vous rendre agreable à celuy qui n'éleve une ame aussi Chrêtienne que la vôtre, qu'autant qu'elle s'aneantit en sa presence ; mais enfin, quand je voudrois, pour vous complaire, passer sous silence le peu que je viens de dire de tous ces rares Avantages de Nature* [xviii] *& de Grace que vous possedez, ils n'en seroient pas moins connus de toute la Terre, par les réjallissemens & les impressions sensibles que vous en faites dans le cœur & dans l'esprit de Messieurs les Princes vos Enfans, qui se sont distinguez dans leur premiere Campagne, avec tant de Valeur, d'Intrepidité, de Conduite & de Sagesse, que le Roi a bien voulu confier à la bravoure de Monsieur le Prince d'Epinoy, à l'âge de dixhuit ans, le Regiment de Picardie, & gratifier Monsieur son Frere, d'une Com-* [xix] *pagnie de Cavalerie, pour reconnoître & animer la Valeur de ces deux jeunes Heros, qui donnent de si belles esperances à tous les braves du Roïaume.*

*Dignes du choix de* LOÜIS LE GRAND, *& saintement animez de ce zele tout de feu de leurs Genereux Ancêtres, pour la Religion & l'Etat, on les a vû courir à la Gloire, & suivre Monseigneur en Allemagne, pour soûtenir les mêmes interêts : ils se partagent aujourd'hui en Flandre & sur le Rhin, afin d'être par tout les Défenseurs* [xx] *des Autels, & faire revivre avec la memoire, le Courage & le Zele des Guillaumes, des Adams de Melun, & des autres Heros du Christianisme, qui ont arrêté les progrez des Infideles, dompté la rebellion des Heretiques, & vaincu par tout les Ennemis de la France.*

*Penetré donc que je suis, des sentimens d'un profond respect pour la Vertu d'une Mere si Glorieuse, & charmé du Zele & de la Generosité des Enfans si dignes de leur Naissance ; que dois-je faire,* MADAME, *aprés avoir pris la confiance de* [xxi] *vous dedier la* Nouvelle Relation de la Gaspesie, *pour la donner au Public sous vos auspices ? sinon d'offrir à Dieu mes Prieres, mes Vœux & mes Sacrifices, pour le conjurer instament de verser avec abondance sur vôtre Illustre Personne, la plenitude de ses Benedictions, & de conserver Messieurs les Princes vos Enfans, dans les dangers, les perils, & les hazards de la Guerre, où l'intrepidité de leur Courage, secondé d'un veritable zele de Religion, les expose à tout moment, pour la Catholicité, & le Service du* [xxii] *premier, du plus Auguste, & du plus Religieux Monarque du Christianisme.*

*Je me trouve,* MADAME, *d'autant plus obligé à ces justes devoirs, qu'aïant l'honneur d'être non-seulement Gardien des Recollets de Lens, qui ont le bonheur d'annoncer l'Evangile de* JESUS-CHRIST *à vos Peuples de la Principauté d'Epinoy, mais encore Superieur d'une Communauté aussi reguliere, & aussi zelée pour la*

*perfection Religieuse, que celle de vos Filles de la Bassée, dont vous êtes la Fondatrice ; avec* [xxiii] *nous devons tous ensemble reconnoître devant Dieu, aux pieds de ses Autels, les puissantes obligations que nous vous avons, & à toute vôtre Illustre Famille ; dans l'esperance que vôtre bonté voudra bien recevoir ce petit essai de l'Histoire de la Gaspesie, aussi favorablement qu'elle m'a reçû moi-même, lorsque j'ai eu l'honneur, à mon arrivée à Paris, de vous témoigner, comme je fais encore à present, avec tout le respect qu'il m'est possible, que je suis &* [xxiv] *serai toute ma vie, par inclination & par obligation,*

*MADAME,*

*Vôtre tres-humble & tres-obeïssant Serviteur.*

FRERE CHRESTIEN LE CLERCQ,

*Missionaire Recollet de la Province d'Artois, & Gardien du Convent de Lens.*

[xxv] # *Extrait du Privilege du Roi.*

PAR Grace & Privilege du Roi, donné à Paris le 30. Decembre 1690. signé, par le Roi en son Conseil, MENESTREL ; Il est permis au R. P. CHRESTIEN LE CLERCQ Missionnaire Recollet, Gardien du Convent de Lens en Artois, de faire imprimer par qui bon luy semblera, un Livre intitulé *Nouvelle Relation de la Gaspesie, qui contient les Mœurs & la Religion des Sauvages Gaspesiens Porte Croix, adorateurs du Soleil, & autres Peuples de l'Amerique Septentrionale, dite le Canada*, durant le tems & espace de huit années consecutives, à compter du jour que led. Livre sera achevé d'imprimer pour la premiere fois : Et défenses à tous Imprimeurs & Libraires [xxvi] de l'imprimer, vendre & debiter, sous quelque pretexte que ce soit, même d'impression étrangere, ou autrement, sans le consentement dudit Exposant, ou de ses aïans cause ; à peine de quinze cens livres d'amende, païables par chacun des contrevenans, confiscation des éxemplaires, & de tous dépens, dommages & interêts, comme il est plus amplement porté par ledit Privilege.

*Registré sur le Livre de la Communauté des Libraires & Imprimeurs de Paris, le 5. Janvier* 1691. *suivant l'Arrêt du Parlement du 8. Avril* 1653. *& celuy du Conseil Privé du Roi, du 27. Février* 1665.

*Signé*, AUBOÜYN, *Syndic.*

Ledit Reverend Pere a cedé son Privilege à AMABLE AUROY Marchand Libraire.

*Achevé d'imprimer pour la premiere fois, le vingtiéme Avril* 1691.

[1] # NOUVELLE RELATION DE LA GASPESIE.

## CHAPITRE PREMIER.

*De la Gaspesie en general.*

LA Gaspesie ou Gaspé, d'où nos Sauvages tirent leur origine & leur nom de Gaspesiens, n'a pas seulement été fameuse & remarquable parmi les Nations de l'Amerique Septen- [2] trionale; soit par la demeure ancienne & ordinaire que les premiers Chefs & les Capitaines, qui sont les Rois & les Souverains de ces Peuples, y ont établië pendant le cours de plusieurs siecles, comme le Siege de leur Empire, & d'un Gouvernement tel qu'il se peut trouver dans le Canada, parmi les Barbares de la Nouvelle France; soit aussi pas les guerres sanglantes, & la fureur de leurs armes victorieuses & triomphantes, qu'ils ont autrefois portées jusques chez les Eskimaux, & les autres Sauvages qui demeurent le long des côtes du grand fleuve de Saint Laurent: Mais elle est encore tres considerable parmi nous, tant par la pêche de Moruë que l'on y fait tous les ans, que par la mine de [3] Plomb qu'on y a découvert depuis quelques années, laquelle toutefois on a été malheureusement obligé d'abandonner, aprés y avoir fait une tres-grande dépense; cette mine n'aïant pas été jugée assez abondante pour en retirer le profit & les avantages qu'on en esperoit: peut-être, à ce que j'en ay pû juger lorsque j'étois sur les lieux, parce que les Mineurs que l'on y avoit envoïez de France, ont voulu trouver sur le haut, le pillon qu'ils eussent pû trouver beaucoup plus facilement au bas du rocher qui cache ce métail, dont l'espece approche davantage, ou pour le moins autant de l'étain, que du plomb.

Ce lieu donc, qui est proprement ce que nous appel- [4] lons Gaspesie, ou autrement Gaspé, est un Païs plein de montagnes, de bois & de rochers, dont la terre est tout-à-fait sterile & ingrate: en un mot, c'est une Baye qui est à l'embouchure du fleuve de Saint Laurent, à la hauteur de quarante-huit degrez, sur quatre à cinq lieuës de largeur, & six à sept de profondeur, qui se termine par un tres-beau bassin & trois rivieres fort poissonneuses, lesquelles se divisent bien avant dans les terres. Elle n'est éloignée que de sept lieuës de l'Isle Percée, qui n'est pas, comme quelques-uns se l'imaginent, une Isle capable de loger des Habitans; puisque ce n'est qu'un rocher fort rude, escarpé de toutes parts, d'une hauteur extraordinaire, & d'une élevation surprenante. Il est [5] même tellement percé dans trois ou quatre endroits differens, que les chaloupes passent toutes mâtées & à pleine voile par la principale de ses ouvertures: C'est de-là qu'il tire son nom de l'Isle Percée, quoique ce ne soit veritablement qu'une Peninsule ou Presqu'isle, dont on peut faire aisément le circuit à pied, lorsque

la marée est basse, & n'aïant la ressemblance d'une Isle qu'à marée haute. Elle n'est separée de la Terre ferme, que de deux à trois arpens de terre : il semble même qu'elle y ait été jointe autrefois, & qu'elle n'en ait été divisée que par les orages & les tempêtes de la mer.

Nous y avons une Mission assez considerable ; d'où j'apprens avec bien de la douleur [6] par un de nos Missionnaires, le Reverend Pere Emanuel Jumeau, qui est de retour du Canada, dans le tems même qu'on imprime cette Histoire, que l'Hospice & l'Eglise que nous y avions fait bâtir, & que les Sauvages les plus barbares de la Nouvelle France avoient en singuliere veneration, n'ont pas été à l'abri de la fureur & de la rage des Anglois, Hollandois & François renegats, qui ont tout reduit en cendres, avec des circonstances capables de faire fremir d'horreur l'Enfer même. Voici le contenu de la Lettre que ce bon Religieux m'écrit de l'Isle Dieu, du quinziéme d'Octobre mil six cens quatre-vingt-dix.

[7] *Mon Reverend Pere,—Ie passe sous silence le détail affligeant du naufrage que nous fîmes l'année passée, dans une nuit affreuse, le vingt-troisiéme de Novembre, contre le Cap des Rosiers, à quinze lieuës de l'Isle Percée, & du malheur que nous avons eu celle-cy, d'avoir été pris par un Armateur de Flessingue, à cinquante lieuës de la Rochelle, pour vous faire part de la douleur qui seule m'occupe entierement à present, & qui, je m'assûre, ne vous affligera pas moins que moy, puisque j'ay été le témoin des peines que vous vous êtes données pour l'établissement de nôtre Mission de l'Isle Percée, & du Zele avec lequel vous y avez procuré la gloire de Dieu, & le salut des* [8] *ames. Il semble que nôtre Seigneur n'ait voulu me conserver la vie dans le naufrage, que pour être aussi le témoin de la ruine totale & de l'entiere desolation de ce lieu ; afin de vous en faire moy-même la relation, qui donnera assez à connoître à tout le monde, jusqu'à quel excez d'impieté & de fureur l'Heresie peut monter, quand une fois elle se trouve en état de tout entreprendre & de tout éxecuter par le ministere de ses adherants. C'est peu de vous dire, qu'au commencement du mois d'Août dernier, deux fregates Angloises parurent sous le Pavillon de France, à la rade de l'Isle de Bonaventure, & par ce stratagême se saisirent aisement de cinq navires Pêcheurs, dont les Capitaines & les équipages, qui étoient alors entierement occupez à la pêche, furent tous* [9] *obligez de se sauver à Quebec ; parce qu'ils n'étoient pas en état de se défendre, ni de resister à tant de Nations liguées contre-eux. Ensuite, ces ennemis jurez de l'Etat & de la Religion aïant tenté une descente à terre, qui leur reüssit comme ils le souhaitoient, ils y sejournerent pendant huit jours tous entiers, où ils commirent cent impietez, avec tous les desordres imaginables ; mais entre autres choses ils pillerent, ravagerent & brûlerent les maisons des Habitans, qui sont bien au nombre de huit ou dix Familles, & qui pour la pluspart s'étoient déja refugiez dans les bois avec precipitation, pour éviter la rencontre & la cruauté de ces impitoïables Heretiques, qui faisoient un horrible carnage, & mettoient tout à feu & à sang. Ie fremis d'horreur au sim-* [10] *ple souvenir des impietez & des sacrileges que ces scelerats commirent dans nôtre Eglise, qui leur servoit de corps de-garde, & de lieu de débauche ; lesquels animez du même esprit que les Iconoclastes, briserent & foulerent aux pieds nos Images, contre lesquelles ils fulminoient mille imprecations, avec des invectives & des injures, comme si elles eussent été vivantes. Les tableaux de la sainte Vierge & de saint Pierre ne furent pas éxemts de leur furie, ni de leurs emportemens ; puisque tous deux furent criblez de plus de cent cinquante coups de fuzil, que ces malheureux lachoient, à chaque fois qu'ils prononçoient par moquerie & par derision ces mots des Litanies :* Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis :

Sancte Petre, ora pro nobis. *Pas une Croix n'échapa à leur* [11] *fureur, à la reserve de celle que j'avois autrefois plantée sur la Table à Rolland, qui pour être sur une montagne de trop difficile accez, subsiste encore à present toute seule, comme le monument sacré de nôtre Christianisme. Les sacrileges de Baltazar, qui prophana autrefois, au milieu d'un festin, les vases sacrez du Temple de Ierusalem, en y faisant boire ses Courtisans & ses Concubines, furent les mêmes que commirent ces Heretiques, lesquels au milieu de leurs horribles débauches, tant de jour que de nuit, beuvoient dans nos Calices des rasades, à la santé du Prince d'Orange, qu'ils benissoient ; fulminant au contraire mille imprecations contre leur Roi legitime. Le Commandant, pour se distinguer autant par ses impietez, qu'il l'étoit par son caractere, se* [12] *revêtit de la plus belle de nos Chasubles ; & par une ostentation aussi vaine que ridicule, se promenoit sur la greve, avec le Soleil d'argent, qu'il avoit fait attacher sur son bonnet ; obligeant ses camarades, par mille paroles de dissolution, à luy rendre les mêmes honneurs & les mêmes reverences, que les Catholiques rendent dans les Processions les plus solemnelles, au tres-saint Sacrement de l'Autel. Ils acheverent enfin toutes ces impietez, par une ceremonie autant extraordinaire dans sa forme, qu'elle est extravagante & abominable dans toutes ses circonstances. Ils prirent les Couronnes du saint Sacrement & de la sainte Vierge, qu'ils poserent sur la tête d'un mouton : ils lierent les pieds de cet animal ; & l'aïant couché sur la Pierre consacrée du* [13] *maître Autel, ils l'égorgerent, & le sacrifierent, en dérision du Sacrifice de la sainte Messe, pour remercier Dieu (à ce qu'ils disoient) des premiers avantages qu'ils remportoient sur les Papistes de la Nouvelle France. Ils mirent ensuite le feu aux quatre coins de l'Eglise, qui fut bien tôt reduite en cendres, de même que celle de nôtre Mission en l'Isle de Bonaventure, qui eut aussi une pareille destinée, aprés qu'ils en eurent brisé les Images, & coupé tous les ornemens à grands coups de sabre. Vous pouvez bien juger, par la douleur que vous ressentez au simple recit que je vous fais de ces desastres, combien je fus sensiblement touché, lorsque dans l'endroit même où avoit été le maître Autel de nôtre Eglise, j'y trouvay encore la carcasse du mou-* [14] *ton qui avoit servi de victime au sacrifice abominable de ces Impies. Outré & penetré de douleur de voir ainsi toutes les Croix de cette Mission hachées par morceaux, ou renversées par terre, je formai en même-tems la resolution de rétablir les principales ; à quoy je reüssis, avec le secours charitable des Habitans, qui se porterent à ce saint ouvrage avec encore plus de pieté & de devotion, que ces miserables Heretiques n'avoient fait paroître de fureur & de rage à les renverser : Mais helas ! mon cher Pere, j'ay grand sujet de croire, & je crains bien qu'elles ne ressentent encore les effets funestes d'une seconde descente de ces ennemis jurez de nôtre sainte Religion ; puisque deux jours aprés l'érection de ces Croix, c'est à dire le dixiéme de Septembre,* [15] *nous fûmes obligez de couper incessament nos cables, & de faire voile à la vûë de sept navires ennemis, qui nous donnerent la chasse d'une étrange maniere, mais dont nous échapâmes enfin heureusement, à la faveur de la nuit, pendant laquelle nous vîmes avec regret toutes les Habitations de la petite riviere en feu. Dieu sçait l'embarras & les inquietudes où nous nous trouvâmes alors, n'aïant point de leste ce qu'il nous en faloit pour forcer de voile, afin de nous éloigner plus promtement de l'Isle Percée, comme nous le souhaitions ; & outre cela, manquant de pain, d'eau douce, & en un mot, de tout ce qui étoit necessaire pour une navigation aussi longue & aussi difficile, que celle de Canada en France ; mais enfin, nôtre Seigneur nous délivra de tous ces dangers par sa misericorde,* [16] *& particulierement de l'Armateur de Flessingue, qui s'étant rendu maitre de nôtre vaisseau, nous pilla entierement ; &*

*ne nous aïant retenu que quatre à cinq heures dans son bord, nous renvoïa dans nôtre navire, aprés beaucoup de menaces & de mauvais traitement : & deux jours aprés, étant derechef poursuivi par un autre vaisseau, nous découvrîmes heureusement l'Isle-Dieu, où nous venons de moüiller l'ancre à la rade, & d'où je vous écris cette Lettre, dans l'esperance de vous entretenir plus amplement des malheurs de nôtre Mission de l'Isle Percée. Souvenez vous cependant de moy dans vos saints Sacrifices, & me croïez pour l'éternité tout à vous.*

Nous avons sans doute lieu de croire, par tant d'horreurs [17] & de sacrileges, que ces Impies ne reüssiront pas dans le projet pernicieux qu'ils ont formé, de desoler entierement la Colonie de la Nouvelle France ; & que le Seigneur, qui se jouë comme il luy plaît des desseins des méchans, protegera ses fideles Sujets contre les ennemis jurez de son saint Evangile, & délivrera son Peuple de l'opression & de la tyrannie de ces cruels Pharaons, en donnant la victoire aux Canadiens, sous la conduite de Monsieur le Comte de Frontenac ; ce que nous avons lieu d'esperer, suivant les dernieres nouvelles que nous avons reçûës du Canada.

L'Eglise de cette Mission étoit destinée au Prince des Apôtres, & la ceremonie que l'on en fit pensa me coûter la [18] vie ; puisque pour la rendre plus celebre, plus pompeuse & plus magnifique, m'étant embarqué dans un canot avec trois de nos Sauvages, afin d'y apporter tout ce que j'aurois pû trouver d'ornemens, le mauvais tems nous surprit : la mer changea presque en un momẽt. Il s'éleva enfin un orage & une tempête si furieuse, qu'elle brisa & emporta les deux extrémitez de nôtre canot, de maniere que nous nous trouvâmes dans l'eau jusques à la ceinture, & dans un danger manifeste de perir & de nous perdre tous, sans le secours charitable de nos Sauvages ; car ces Barbares, qui étoient alors, par bonheur pour nous, cabanez sur les rivages de la mer, s'apperçûrent heureusement de nôtre disgrace : Ils en furent si sen- [19] siblement touchez, qu'ils quitterent promtement leurs habits, & par une generosité que nous ne pouvons assez reconnoître ni admirer, les uns se jetterent tous nuds à la nage, & quelques autres s'embarquerent avec tant de succez dans leurs canots, qu'ils nous délivrerent enfin du peril où nous nous êtions malheureusement engagez. Nos Capitaines François voulurent reconnoître par leurs festins & les presens, qu'ils firent genereusement à tous ces Sauvages, les bons offices qu'ils venoient de rendre à leur Missionaires ; & par une sainte émulation, ces Messieurs voulurent bien donner aussi tout l'éclat, & faire paroître toute la ferveur qu'on pouvoit souhaiter dans un Païs barbare, [20] & dans une conjoncture si fâcheuse, pour honorer la ceremonie de la Dedicace de la premiere Eglise qu'on ait jamais érigée à la gloire de Dieu dans ce lieu de pêche, depuis l'établissement de la Foi, & la naissance du Christianisme dans la Nouvelle France ; comme vous le pouvez voir fort au long, dans le Livre que j'ay fait *du premier établissement de la Foi dans la Nouvelle France*, qui se vend chez le même Libraire. Cette Mission avec celle de l'Isle de Bonaventure, qui a Sainte-Claire pour Titulaire & pour Patrone, & qui n'est éloignée de l'Isle Percée, que par le trajet d'une petite lieuë, nous a été donnée du consentement de Monseigneur de Laval, alors Evêque de Petrée & Vi- [21] caire Apostolique, mais depuis premier Evêque de Quebec ; par Monsieur le Comte de Frontenac Lieutenant General des armées du Roi, Gouverneur de toute la Nouvelle France : afin que rien ne manquât au zele infatigable qu'il a toûjours fait paroître pour le soulagement spirituel

& temporel des Sujets de sa Majesté, qui viennent negocier, pêcher, ou s'habituer dans cette nouvelle Colonie. Les Recolets luy seront à jamais redevables de l'honneur, d'avoir été les premiers Missionnaires sedentaires de cette belle Mission, qui s'est renduë celebre & florissante, par les travaux & les soins Apostoliques qu'ils ont pris pour le salut des François & des Sauvages qui la composent aujourd'huy. C'est [22] là où les Reverends Peres Hilarion Guesnin & Exuper de Thunes ont signalé leur zele & leur pieté, avec une édification singuliere de tous ces Peuples.

Le tres-Reverend Pere Potentien Ozon, Provincial des Recollets de Saint Antoine de Pade en Artois, qui passa en qualité de Commissaire & Superieur de nos Missions en 1675. m'y destina la même année, pour y continuer le bien que ces illustres Missionnaires y avoient déja saintement commencé. Le Lion d'or, commandé par le Capitaine Coûturier, fut le vaisseau sur lequel je m'embarquay, afin de me rendre au plûtôt à l'Isle Percée. Nous y arrivâmes le ving septiéme Octobre de la même année, aprés avoir [23] essuïé mille dangers ; mais entr'autres une tempête si fâcheuse & si violente, tout proche de la fameuse Isle d'Anticostie, que nôtre Capitaine se voïant dans l'impossibilité de resister à la fureur de l'orage, prit la resolution de repasser en France, sans moüiller l'ancre à la rade de l'Isle de Bonaventure, & ainsi d'y abandonner les hommes qu'il y avoit laissez en allant à Quebec, pour y faire la pêche de Moruë : mais enfin, le calme succedant tout à coup à la tempête, sur les dix heures du matin, fit changer de dessein à nôtre Capitaine, qui continua sa route comme auparavant ; & aprés beaucoup de peines & de fatigues, nous abordâmes, graces à Dieu, fort heureusement, à [24] l'Habitation de Monsieur Denys, sur les quatre heures aprés midi, qui étoit tres bien logé, sur le bord d'un bassin vulgairement appellé la Petite riviere, separé de la mer par une belle langue de terre, qui par l'agrément merveilleux qu'elle donne à ce lieu, le rend un sejour fort agreable.

La solitude où je me trouvay alors, sans y penser, avec trois à quatre personnes qui étoient au service de Monsieur Denys, n'eut rien que d'engageant & d'aimable pour moy : je peux même dire, avec verité, qu'elle fut la principale de toutes mes consolations ; puisqu'elle me procura tout le tems que je pouvois raisonnablement souhaiter, pour me disposer saintement aux fonctions penibles & laborieuses de ma premiere [25] Mission, que le merite de l'obeïssance venoit de confier à mes soins.

Un homme, qui dans la bassesse de son extraction, conservoit une vertu peu commune & assez rare, parmi les domestiques les plus zelez pour le service de Dieu & de leurs Maîtres, adoucit beaucoup les rigueurs de nôtre hivernement. On peut dire que j'étois charmé du plaisir qu'il prenoit dans les entretiens que nous avions souvent ensemble, touchant l'affaire importante de son salut. Il prenoit un soin particulier de m'éveiller tous les jours regulierement à quatre heures, afin de me disposer à celebrer la sainte Messe, que je disois ordinairement à la pointe du jour, avec les Prieres du ma- [26] tin : & le soir, selon la coûtume tres-loüable & generalement observée dans toutes les Familles de la Nouvelle France, nous disions le Chapelet en commun, avec les Prieres ordinaires, qui étoient suivies de la lecture des Reflexions les plus touchantes du Jugement dernier, composées par le tres-Reverend Pere Hyacinthe le Febvre. Comme c'est un ouvrage rempli d'érudition, & des veritez les plus solides du Christianisme, il m'a aussi toûjours été d'un tres-grand secours dans tous les endroits differents où l'obeïssance m'a destiné pour le service de nos Missions. Je l'appellois mon Missionnaire par excellence, qui pendant mon absence travailloit fructueusement

à la conversion [27] des ames ; puisqu'en effet l'aïant une fois donné à quelqu'un de ces Catholiques, dont la vie n'étoit pas des plus regulieres, la lecture qu'il en fit pendant six semaines, luy inspira des sentimens d'une contrition si sincere & si veritable, qu'en me remettant ce Livre entre les mains, il me fit une confession generale de toute sa vie passée, aprés avoir été plus de dix-huit ans, sans frequenter le Sacrement de Penitence.

Je m'appliquai serieusement pendant tout cet hiver, à l'étude de certains Ecrits de la langue Algomquinne, que l'on m'avoit donnez ; croïant qu'ils me seroient necessaires pour l'instruction des Sauvages au retour de leur chasse, qu'ils faisoient à quinze ou vingt [28] lieuës de nôtre Habitation. Tout mon travail cependant fut inutile, car nos Gaspesiens n'entendoient que tres-imparfaitement l'Algomquin ; & il me falut tout de nouveau commencer l'étude des Prieres Gaspesiennes que l'on m'envoïa de Quebec par la premiere barque, qui au commencement du printems partit pour l'Isle Percée. Je les appris en fort peu de tems, avec beaucoup plus de facilité que je ne me l'étois persuadé : je les enseignai même pour la premiere fois à nos Sauvages, avec beaucoup de succez, par des caracteres instructifs, dont je parlerai dans la suite de cette Histoire. Mais enfin, comme toute l'application que je donnois pour me rendre sçavant dans le Gaspesien, [29] dont l'intelligence est absolument necessaire, quelque difficile qu'il soit, aux Missionnaires qui veulent travailler efficacement au salut de ces Peuples, étoit interrompuë pendant l'été, par les services que j'étois obligé de rendre à nos François, qui viennent quelque-fois jusques au nombre de quatre à cinq cens, faire la pêche de Moruë à l'Isle Percée : Je pris resolution, aprés le départ des navires, de suivre les Sauvages dans les bois pendant l'hiver, & de demeurer avec eux dans leurs cabanes, pour m'instruire entierement dans la langue Gaspesienne, que je me suis enfin renduë assez familiere, aprés beaucoup de peines & de travaux. J'en ay même fait un Diction- [30] naire, que j'ay laissez à Quebec, dans nôtre Convent de Nôtre-Dame des Anges ; afin de faciliter à nos Missionaires, comme il m'a fait, tout le bien qu'il a plû à Nôtre-Seigneur d'operer par mon foible ministere, & qu'il voudra faire par leur zele, dans la conversion de ces Infideles, qui habitent plus de deux cens lieuës de ce Nouveau Monde, & qui portent plusieurs noms differens, suivant la difference des rivieres & des endroits les plus considerables qu'ils habitent.

Comme je me suis singulierement appliqué, par le conseil de mes amis, à en connôitre éxactement les Maximes, les Mœurs & la Religion, j'ay crû que j'en devois donner au Public une pein- [31] ture & une idée fidele & parfaite, par cette nouvelle Relation ; trop heureux & trop satisfait de mes peines, si on en fait la lecture avec le même plaisir que j'écris le détail de tout ce que j'ay remarqué de plus curieux & de plus agreable, dans les Missions que j'ay eu l'honneur de cultiver, pendant les douze années que j'ay demeuré dans la Nouvelle France.

C'est une erreur qui n'est que trop commune, dont il est à propos de desabuser le Public. Il faut avoüer qu'on se persuade trop facilement dans nôtre Europe, que les Peuples de l'Amerique Septentrionale, pour n'avoir pas été élevez dans les maximes de la civilité, ne retiennent de la nature humaine que le seul [32] titre d'Hommes Sauvages, & qu'ils n'ont aucunes de ces belles qualitez de corps & d'esprit, qui distinguent l'espece humaine de celle des animaux de la terre ; les croïant tous velus comme des ours, & plus inhumains que les tygres & les leopards. Il est bon cependant, pour corriger une idée si grossiere, si injuste & si peu raisonnable, qu'on sçache la difference qu'il y a entre nos

Sauvages, & quantité d'autres Peuples feroces & cruels ; mais particulierement des Habitans des Isles des Gorgades, dont l'Histoire fait mention qu'un certain Hano Capitaine Cartaginois, rapporta deux peaux de femmes toutes veluës, qu'il fit mettre dans le Temple de Junon, comme un prodige & [33] une rareté singuliere : puisqu'en effet nos Gaspesiens ont moins de poil que les François, les aïant vû moy même s'arracher celuy de la barbe jusques à la racine, pour n'en avoir non plus que les femmes ; & qu'enfin la Nature leur inspire assez de tendresse & de charité envers leurs Enfans, leurs Compatriotes, & les Etrangers même, pour ne les pas croire semblables aux animaux les plus feroces & les plus furieux, comme il sera aisé de remarquer dans la suite de cette Histoire, où je ferai paroître par la sincerité de mon stile, le Sauvage Gaspesien, en quelque état qu'on le puisse considerer.

## [34] CHAPITRE II.

### *De l'Origine des Gaspesiens.*

L'ORIGINE de ces Peuples, & la maniere dont ce Nouveau Monde a été habité par une multitude presque infinie de Peuples de tant de Nations differentes, nous paroît tellement obscure, qu'aprés les recherches les plus curieuses & les plus éxactes qu'on en a faites jusques à present, tout le monde est obligé d'avoüer & de confesser ingenûment, qu'on n'en peut avoir une connoissance juste & veritable.

Il semble que ce secret devroit être uniquement reservé aux Sauvages, & que d'eux [35] seuls on en devroit apprendre toute la verité ; puisqu'enfin il a été un tems parmi nous, qu'on ignoroit qu'il y eût une Amerique Septentrionale, que les plus sçavans mêmes ne faisoient pas difficulté de loger dans les espaces imaginaires, ne la pouvant loger dans la capacité de leurs esprits, & qu'il n'y a pas encore deux cens ans qu'on en a fait la premiere découverte. Nos Gaspesiens cependant ne nous peuvent rien apprendre de certain sur ce sujet ; peut-être parce qu'ils n'ont aucune connoissance des belles Lettres, qui leur pourroient donner celle de leurs ancêtres, & de leur origine. Ils ont bien, si vous voulez, quelque idée legere & fabuleuse de la creation du Monde & du deluge ; disant que lors- [36] que le Soleil, qu'ils ont toûjours reconnu & adoré comme leur Dieu, crea tout ce grand Univers, il divisa promtement la Terre en plusieurs parties, toutes separées les unes des autres par de grands lacs : que dans chaque partie il fit naître un homme & une femme, qui multiplierent, & vêcurent fort long-tems ; mais qu'étant devenus méchans avec leurs enfans, qui se tuoient les uns les autres, le Soleil en pleura de douleur, & la pluie tomba du Ciel en si grande abondance, que les eaux monterent jusques à la cime des rochers & des montagnes les plus hautes & les plus élevées. Cette inondation, qui, disent-ils, fut generale par toute la terre, les obligea de s'embarquer sur leurs canots d'écorce, [37] pour se sauver du gouffre furieux de ce deluge general : mais ce fut en vain, car ils perirent tous malheureusement, par un vent impetueux qui les culbuta, & les ensevelit dans cet horrible abîme ; à la reserve cependant de quelques vieillards & de quelques femmes, qui avoient été les plus vertueux & les meilleurs

de tous les Sauvages. Dieu vint ensuite, pour les consoler de la mort de leurs parens & de leurs amis : aprés quoy il les laissa vivre sur la terre, dans une grande & heureuse tranquillité ; leur donnant avec cela, toute l'adresse & l'industrie necessaire pour prendre des castors & des orignaux, autant qu'ils en auroient besoin pour leur subsistance. Ils ajoûtent encore [38] quelques autres circonstances tout-à-fait ridicules, que j'obmets volontiers ; parce qu'elles ne nous prouvent aucunement un secret inconnu aux hommes, & reservé à Dieu seul.

D'autres veulent que ce Nouveau Monde ait été peuplé par quelques particuliers, qui s'étant embarquez sur la mer pour établir une Colonie dans les Païs étrangers, furent attaquez par l'orage & la tempête, qui les jetta sur les côtes de l'Amerique Septentrionale, où ils firent malheureusement naufrage, & perdirent avec leurs navires, tout ce qu'ils pouvoient avoir de biens & de plus precieux dans le monde ; en sorte que ce naufrage les aïant mis tout-à-fait hors d'esperance de repas-[39]ser jamais dans leur Païs, ils prirent la resolution de travailler serieusement à la conservation de leurs vies, s'adonnant à la pêche & à la chasse, qui ont toûjours été fort abondantes dans ces quartiers ; & qu'au défaut de leurs habits, la necessité, qui est la mere des inventions, leur donna l'industrie de se vêtir de peaux de castor, d'origniac, & des autres animaux qu'ils tuoient à la chasse : qu'il se pouvoit faire veritablement qu'ils fussent instruits des Misteres sacrez de nôtre sainte Religion, qu'ils eussent même la connoissance & l'usage des belles Lettres ; puisque dans les établissemens des Colonies, on y fait ordinairement passer des hommes également sçavants & devots, pour en- [40]seigner aux Peuples avec les sciences humaines, les maximes les plus solides de la sagesse & de la pieté Chrêtienne : mais que personne ne leur aïant succedé dans ces glorieux emplois, la connoissance qu'ils avoient du vrai Dieu, des belles Lettres & de leur Origine, s'étoit ainsi insensiblement perduë & effacée dans leur malheureuse posterité, par la succession des tems.

Quoiqu'il en soit, le culte ancien & l'usage religieux de la Croix, qu'on admire encore aujourd'huy parmi les Sauvages de la riviere de Mizamichis, que nous avons honorée du titre auguste de la riviere de Sainte-Croix, pourroient bien nous persuader en quelque façon, [41] que ces Peuples ont reçû autrefois la connoissance de l'Evangile & du Christianisme, qui s'est enfin perduë, par la negligence & le libertinage de leurs ancêtres ; à peu prés comme nous lisons dans la Vie de S. François Xavier, qui trouva dans l'une de ses Missions une belle Croix que l'Apôtre saint Thomas y avoit plantée, & un Peuple qui n'avoit plus qu'une legere, ou presque point d'idée de la veritable Religion, que cet illustre Disciple de Jesus luy avoit prêchée avec tant de zele, aux dépens de sa vie & de tout son sang. J'en ferai un traité particulier, lorsque je parlerai de la Religion des Gaspesiens, dont l'origine nous est tout-à-fait inconnuë. Ils observent cependant, & retiennent dans [42] leur conduite plusieurs maximes de nos premiers Peres, étant vêtus, logez & nourris comme eux ; n'aïant pas même d'autres armes, soit pour la guerre, soit pour la chasse, que celles qui furent premierement en usage chez nos ancêtres, aprés la creation du Monde.

## CHAPITRE III.

*De la Naissance des Gaspesiens.*

ON a douté avec justice, si les hommes recevoient plus d'avantage en naissant, qu'en mourant : c'est pour cela que cette question passoit autrefois en problême chez certains Peuples, qui parta- [43] geoient leurs pleurs & leur joie à la naissance & à la mort de leurs enfans, par rapport au bonheur ou au malheur qu'ils recevroient dans ces deux états si contraires, & tout à fait opposez. C'étoient là les opinions litigieuses & problêmatiques de ces anciens Philosophes dans les tenebres de l'infidelité, où ils manquoient de lumiere pour connoître qu'il n'y a que la vertu & le peché qui rendent la vie ou la mort bienheureuse, ou malheureuse. Comme nos Sauvages ont été privez de ces belles instructions que le Christianisme inspire à ceux qui renaissent au Saint Esprit par le Baptême, & qu'ils se croïent tous égaux à la vie comme à la mort, sans distinction des Chefs du com- [44] mun de la Nation, ils se réjoüissent tous ensembles à la naissance de leurs enfans, jusques à faire des festins des harangues publiques, & toutes sortes de réjoüissances.

Il n'est pas de nos Gaspesiens comme des Cimbres, qui mettoient les leurs dans les neiges pour les endurcir au froid, & les accoûtumer à la fatigue ; ni comme de nos anciens Gaulois, qui les jettoient dans l'eau aussi-tôt qu'ils étoient nez, dans la croïance que ceux qui nageoient & qui venoient sur l'eau en se debatant, étoient veritablement legitimes ; & que ceux qui couloient à fond devoient être reputez bâtards & illegitimes. Les Sauvages lavent leurs enfans dans la riviere, aussi-tôt [45] qu'ils sont venus au monde : ensuite ils leur font avaler de l'huile d'ours ou de loup marin ; & pour berceau, ils les font reposer sur une petite planche qu'ils couvrent de peaux de castor, ou de quelques autres pelleteries. Les femmes ornent curieusement ce petit berceau, de quelques grains de rassade, de pourcelaine, de porc-épy, & de certaines figures qu'elles forment avec leur matachias, pour l'enjoliver, & le rendre d'autant plus magnifique, qu'elles aiment leurs enfans ; ausquels elles font de petites robes de peau toutes matachiées, qu'elles embelissent de tout ce qu'elles ont de plus joli & de plus curieux. Elles acouchent avec beaucoup de facilité, & portent des fardeaux tres- [46] pesans pendant leur grossesse. Plusieurs même se trouvant prises de ce mal en allant querir du bois, se retirent un peu à l'écart pour mettre leurs enfans au monde ; & elles apportent le bois à la cabanne sur le dos, avec leurs enfans entre leurs bras, comme si de rien n'étoit. Une Sauvagesse étant un jour en canot, & se sentant pressée par les douleurs de l'enfantement, pria ceux de sa compagnie de la mettre à terre, & de l'attendre un moment : elle entra seule dans le bois, où elle acoucha d'un garçon, qu'elle apporta au canot, sur lequel elle rama tout le reste du chemin. Elles n'enfantent point dans la cabanne, les hommes ne la cedant jamais ; lesquels y de- [47] meurent, tandis que la femme accouche dans les bois, au pied d'un arbre. Si elle a un peu de peine, on luy attache les bras en haut à quelque perche, luy bouchant le nez, les oreilles & la bouche ; aprés quoy on luy presse fortement les flancs, afin de contraindre l'enfant de sortir du ventre de sa mere. Si elle se sent un peu

trop violentée, elle appelle les Jongleurs, qui viennent avec joie, pour extorquer quelque pipe de tabac, ou quelques autres choses dont ils ont besoin : disant que c'est un present qu'ils demandent pour leur Ouahiche, c'est à dire pour leur Demon ; afin qu'il chasse & qu'il ôte ce ver qui empêche l'accouchement. C'est ainsi que ces maîtres fourbes s'ingerent par [48] tout, comme vous le verrez fort au long dans le Chapitre XIV. où je traite de la superstition des Gaspesiens.

Nos Gaspesiens ne sont pas si ridicules que ceux de l'Amerique Meridionale, qui au même instant que leurs femmes sont accouchées, se mettent au lit, comme s'ils avoient eux-mêmes souffert les douleurs & les tranchées de l'enfantement ; pendant que leurs femmes, avec toutes leurs parentes & leurs amies s'efforcent de consoler ce malade imaginaire, à qui elles donnent mille douceurs, & tout ce qu'elles ont de meilleur. Les Sauvages ont trop de cœur, pour vouloir passer pour des femmes nouvellement accouchées, puisqu'ils [49] soulagent leurs compagnes avec beaucoup de charité ; allant à la chasse, pour fournir abondament dequoy les nourrir, afin qu'elles puissent allaiter leurs enfans : car il est inoüi qu'elles les mettent en nourrice, ne pouvant se résoudre de donner aux autres les fruits de leurs entrailles ; blâmant par cette conduite, l'insensibilité de ces meres qui abandonnent ces petits innocens aux soins des nourrices, dont ils sucent assez souvent la corruption avec le lait : comme l'experience malheureuse l'a fait assez voir dans la conduite d'Alexandre le Grand, & de l'Empereur Caligula ; dont le premier, au rapport de saint Clement Alexandrin, s'enyvroit comme une bête, parce que sa mere étoit [50] sujette au vin : le second, suivant le témoignage de l'Histoire, ne respiroit que le sang & le carnage, jusques-là qu'il souhaitoit avec passion que le Peuple Romain n'eût qu'une seule tête, afin de pouvoir décapiter d'un seul coup, tous les Citoïens d'une si puissante Republique ; parce que sa nourrice, pour l'accoûtumer à la cruauté & luy inspirer une humeur barbare, rougissoit avec son sang le bout de ses mamelles. Nos pauvres Sauvagesses ont tant de tendresse pour leurs enfans, qu'elles n'estiment pas moins la qualité de nourrice, que de mere : elles les allaitent même jusques à l'âge de quatre à cinq ans ; & lorsqu'ils commencent à manger, elles mâchent la viande, pour la [51] leur faire avaler. On ne peut exprimer la tendresse & l'amitié que les peres & meres ont pour leurs enfans. J'ay vû leur offrir des presens considerables, afin qu'ils les donnassent à quelques François pour les faire passer en France : mais c'est leur arracher le cœur ; & ils verroient des millions, qu'ils ne les abandonneroient pas d'un moment. Ces enfans malheureux païent souvent d'ingratitude ces pauvres parens ; car on en a vû qui ont tué & assassiné leurs peres, quand ils sont parvenus à une vieillesse décrepite : on a vû, dis-je, ces monstres de nature qui les ont abandonnez au milieu des bois & des neiges, & qui pour comble de cruauté, leur ont cassé la tête.

[52] Leur occupation ordinaire est de faire des arcs & des fléches pour tirer aux oiseaux, avec des lignes & des hameçons pour la pêche. Ils sont si adroits à ces éxercices, qu'ils tuent toutes sortes d'oiseaux en volant.

## CHAPITRE IV.

*Des habillemens & parures des Gaspesiens.*

QUOIQUE quelques-uns de nos Sauvages se servent aujourd'huy de couvertures, capots, just'au-corps, & des étofes qu'on apporte de France pour leur faire des habits ; il est toutefois constant qu'avant l'établissement des François dans ce nouveau Monde, [53] ils ne se couvroient que de peaux d'origniac, de castors, de martes & de loups marins, dont sont encore à present vêtus plusieurs de ces Peuples. La figure & la representation d'Hercules, qui a sur ses épaules en forme de manteau, la peau du lion qu'il avoit genereusement vaincu & terrassé, comme l'Histoire rapporte, est à peu prés celle d'un Sauvage dans sa cabanne, vêtu à la mode de ses ancêtres ; qui ont cependant toûjours fait paroître, comme les Gaspesiens d'aujourd'huy, beaucoup plus de pudeur que cette fausse Divinité, par le soin particulier qu'ils prennent de couvrir & de cacher ce que la nature & la bien-seance ne permettent pas de montrer. Le grand froid, de plus, qu'il [54] fait pendant l'hiver dans le Canada, les oblige de se couvrir bien plus modestement : mais au reste, quelque rigoureux que soit l'hiver, & quelque excessive que la chaleur soit en été dans leur Païs, ils se servent toûjours également de bas en étriers & sans pied ; & leurs souliers, qui sont tous plats & sans talons, ressemblent proprement à des chaussons de cuir, qu'ils fourrent de peaux d'origniac, pour se conserver toûjours de la chaleur aux pieds. Quant à leurs habits, ils sont grands & larges : les manches ne tiennent point au corps ; elles en sont separées, & liées l'une à l'autre par deux courroies, qui se partagent également par une ouverture qui sert à passer la tête. Une de ces manches [55] tombe par devant, & elle ne ne couvre que la moitié du bras : & l'autre par derriere, qui couvre toutes les épaules. Les habits des femmes ne sont en rien differens de ceux des hommes : je vous dirai seulement qu'elles se parent & s'habillent avec tant de reserve & de modestie, qu'elles ne laissent voir aucune nudité qui puisse blesser la pudeur & l'honnêteté. Pour leurs habillemens, elles se servent d'une couverture blanche ou rouge, qui leur tombe depuis les épaules jusqu'à mi-jambe, en forme de tunique, dont elles s'envelopent tout le corps, qu'elles ceignent d'une ceinture garnie de rassade & de pourcelaine.

Il est à remarquer qu'il n'est pas possible de leur persua- [56] der de s'habiller à la Françoise, & qu'il n'y a rien de si grotesque, que de voir une de nos Sauvagesses vêtuë en Bourgeoise, ou en Damoiselle. Elles paroissent en cet habillement, du sentiment & de l'humeur de David au regard des armes que Saül luy voulut donner pour combatre contre Goliath : elles disent qu'elles n'en peuvent approuver l'usage, & qu'il leur seroit impossible de marcher ni d'agir librement, avec les habits de nos Françoises ; en un mot, elles sont si entêtées des leurs, qu'elles ne veulent pas seulement entendre parler des nôtres : Mais ce qui me paroît encore assez ridicule, tant parmi les hommes que parmi les femmes ; c'est que les uns & les autres mettent pour l'or- [57] dinaire leurs chemises par-dessus leurs habits.

Les ornemens & les bijoux les plus superbes, les plus magnifiques, & aussi

les plus ordinaires dont elles se parent dans les assemblées & les festins publics, consistent en quelques coliers, ceintures & brasselets, qu'elles font elles-mêmes, & qu'elles enjolivent d'une maniere toute innocente, avec de la rassade & du poil de porc-épi, qu'elles teingnent en rouge ou en jaune, suivant leur goût & leur fantaisie : mais au reste elles sont ennemiës du luxe & de la vanité ; condamnant même par leur modestie, l'ambition & les dépenses superfluës & tout-à-fait criminelles de ces femmes qui portent sur elles tant de richesses & de bijoux, que Saint [58] Clement Alexandrin s'étonne qu'elles ne succombent sous un fardeau si lourd & si pesant.

Il est encore inoüi de voir chez elles de ces nuditez criminelles & volontaires, indignes de ces Dames veritablement Chrêtiennes, qui ont tant soit peu d'amour pour la pureté & de zele pour l'honneur & la gloire de leur sexe. Elles se contentent de ce que la nature leur a donné de grace & de beauté, qu'elles diminuent même encore assez souvent, en les voulant conserver par l'artifice & le secours de leurs matachias, mais d'une maniere tout à fait ridicule. Il faut sçavoir que par le matachias des Sauvages, dont nous parlerons souvent, on entend ordinairement un [59] mélange de differentes couleurs, dont ils se servent pour se peindre le visage, ou pour former sur leurs habits certaines figures de bêtes fauves, d'oiseaux, ou de quelques autres animaux, tels qu'il leur vient dans l'imagination. Ils ne connoissent que quatre sortes de couleurs, sçavoir le rouge, le blanc, le noir & le jaune : ils n'ont pas même de nom propre & particulier dans leur langue, pour exprimer les autres dont nous nous servons en Europe. Le rouge qu'ils mettent en usage n'est pas vif comme nôtre vermillon ; ce n'est qu'un rouge sombre, à peu prés comme le sang de dragon : mais pour la Tissaouhianne, qui est une petite racine rouge & deliée, semblable à la graine de per- [60] sil, elle est de valeur, disent-ils, & fort estimée parmi eux ; en effet nos Gaspesiennes, qui la conservent avec beaucoup de soin, s'en accommodent admirablement bien pour teindre d'un beau rouge éclatant le poil de porc-épi, avec lequel elles enjolivent les canots, les raquettes, & les autres ouvrages qu'on envoie en France par curiosité.

Lors donc que nous disons que les Sauvages se matachient, cela veut dire qu'ils se barboüillent le visage, tantôt de noir, & tantôt de rouge, comme il leur plaît. Les plus fantasques font un mêlange de ces deux couleurs : les uns se peignent d'une seule ou de plusieurs couleurs ; les autres se barboüillent tout le front de rouge, & le reste du vi- [61] sage de noir : d'autres enfin, encore plus capricieux que les premiers, se tirent une ligne toute noire depuis le milieu du front jusques au bout du nez, & les deux joües seront toutes mouchetées & raïées de blanc, de jaune, de noir & de rouge. Ce matachias est proprement celuy dont ils se servent au jour des festins, & de leurs recreations les plus solemnelles. Ils en usent même jusques dans le deüil ; car pour marquer leur tristesse & leur affliction, lorsqu'ils apprennent la mort de quelques-uns de leurs proches, ils se matachient toute la face de noir : & quand ils vont en guerre, ils se servent alors de rouge ; afin, disent-ils, que leurs ennemis, ni leurs compagnons mêmes ne puissent [62] appercevoir les differens changemens de visage, que la crainte fait assez souvent paroître dans les personnes les plus intrepides & les plus genereuses.

Au reste, il me semble qu'on ne doit pas tant s'étonner de ce que nos Sauvages se matachient d'une maniere qui nous paroît si ridicule ; puisqu'il est constant que les Romains se peignoient autrefois le corps de vermillon, au

rapport de Pline, quand ils entroient en triomphe dans la Ville de Rome ; & qu'ils en coloroient même leur Jupiter. Deplus, nous voïons aujourd'huy, sans aller chercher l'antiquité, que les femmes n'empruntent que trop souvent, par les mouches & par leur fard, une beauté que la nature leur a [63] refusée. Aussi nos Sauvages qui vinrent il y a quelque-tems en France, n'ont pû entendre sans s'éclater de rire, la raillerie de certaines Dames qui les prenoient pour des mascarades, parce qu'ils paroissoient à la Cour, matachiez à la Sauvagesse : Elles n'ont point d'esprit, répondirent-ils à leur Interprete, & leur reproche est injuste, puisqu'elles ont elles-mêmes le visage tout moucheté de noir, comme nos Sauvages, dont il semble qu'elles portent toûjours le deüil, par leur maniere de se matachier.

Les Gaspesiens vont tous, pour l'ordinaire, tête nuë ; coûtume qui est assûrément tres-ancienne : car nous apprenons par l'Histoire Romaine, que Jules Cesar marchoit toû- [64] jours de cette maniere devant ses troupes, tant au Soleil, qu'à la pluie ; & qu'il ne porta un laurier en forme de couronne, qu'aprés en avoir demandé & obtenu la permission du Senat. Nos Sauvages se forment aussi assez souvent une espece de couronne, avec les deux aîles des oiseaux qu'ils onttuez à la chasse ; & ils ne se sont jamais servis de bonnets ni de chapeaux, que depuis que les François leur en ont donné l'usage. Ils laissent pendre leurs cheveux : quelque fois ils les troussent par derriere, ou bien ils en font des cadenettes, qu'ils lient proprement, & qu'ils enjolivent avec de petits coliers de rassade & de pourcelaine. Quoique les enfans y naissent avec des cheveux de diverses couleurs, [65] comme en Europe ; cependant ces Barbares ne sont jamais blonds quand ils sont avancez en âge, quelque soin qu'ils prennent de leurs cheveux : car vous remarquerez qu'ils en font grande estime, & qu'ils ne les noircissent qu'à force de les graisser, & de les froter continuellement d'une espece de graisse, qu'ils conservent uniquement pour cet usage. Les filles mêmes & les femmes en mettent sur leurs visages, aussi-bien que sur les cheveux, particulierement quand il est question de paroître en public ; se persuadant qu'elles ne sont jamais plus belles ni plus agreables, que lorsqu'elles ont un visage tout luisant de graisse. Elles se percent aussi les oreilles, ausquelles elles attachent quelques [66] grains de rassade, avec des grelots, sols-marquez, deniers, & autres bagatelles de cette nature, qui leur servent de pendans d'oreilles. J'ay vû même, avec assez de surprise, d'autres Sauvages, communément appellez les Nez-percez ; parce qu'effectivement ils se percent le tendron du nez, auquel ils attachent quelques grains de chapelet ou de pourcelaine, qui leur tombent sur l'extrémité des lévres.

Voila les habillemens & la parure de nos Gaspesiens, qu'ils estiment au-delà de tout ce qu'on pourroit s'imaginer : ils sont si infatuez de leurs manieres de s'habiller & de leurs maximes de vivres, qu'ils méprisent les nôtres, & ne s'y peuvent du tout accoûtu- [67] mer. Ils n'ont pas moins aussi de répugnance pour bâtir des Maisons & des Palais comme nous : ils se moquent & se raillent de nos édifices les plus somptueux & les plus magnifiques ; cependant ils en admirent la beauté, autant qu'ils en sont capables, mais enfin sans en vouloir profiter.

## CHAPITRE V.

*Des Cabannes & logemens des Gaspesiens.*

COMME ces Peuples vivent sans societé & sans commerce, ils n'ont ni Villes, ni Bourgs, ni Villages, à moins qu'on ne veüille appeller de ce nom quelques [68] amas de Cabannes en forme de tentes, bien mal propres, & assez mal arrangées.

Leur Cabannes ne sont composées que de perches, qu'ils couvrent de quelques écorces de bouleau, cousuës les unes avec les autres, & enjolivées le plus souvent par mille figures differentes d'oiseaux, d'origniac, de loutres & de castors, que les femmes y craïonnent elles-mêmes avec leur matachias. Ces Cabannes sont d'une figure ronde, capables de loger quinze à vingt personnes ; en sorte cependant qu'avec sept ou huit écorces, ils en construisent une dans laquelle on void des trois à quatre feux. Elles sont si legeres & si portatives, que nos Sauvages les roulent [69] comme un morceau de papier, & les portent ainsi sur leur dos, par tout où il leur plaît ; semblables à peu prés aux tortuës, qui portent leurs maisons ; & suivant la coûtume ancienne de nos premiers Peres, lesquels ne demeuroient cabannez dans un lieu, qu'autant de tems qu'ils y trouvoient dequoy subsister avec leurs familles & leurs troupeaux. C'est ainsi que nos Gaspesiens décampent, lorsqu'ils ne trouvent plus dequoy vivre dans les lieux où ils resident ; parce que n'aïant ni bestiaux à nourrir, ni terres, ni champs à cultiver, ils sont obligez d'être presque toûjours errans & vagabons, pour chercher la nourriture, & les autres commoditez necessaires à la vie.

[70] Il appartient au Chef de la famille, privativement à tout autre, d'ordonner de cabanner où il luy plaît, & de décabanner quand il veut. C'est pourquoy, la veille du départ, il va luy-même tracer le chemin qu'on doit tenir, & choisir un lieu propre & commode pour camper : il en ôte tout le méchant bois, coupe les branches qui pourroient l'incommoder, applanit & fraie une route, pour faciliter aux femmes le moïen de traîner sur la neige & sur leur tabagannes, le peu de meubles & de bagages qui composent leurs ménages. Il marque encore luy seul le plan de la Cabanne : il jette la neige avec ses raquettes, jusques à ce qu'il ait trouvé la terre, qu'il applanit & qu'il hache par mor- [71] ceaux, pour en ôter tout ce qui est gelé ; afin de loger le plus commodément qu'il peut, le nombre de gens qui composent sa famille. Cela étant fait, il coupe ensuite autant de perches qu'il juge à propos, & les plante en rond, sur le bord du creux qu'il a fait dans la terre & dans la neige ; en sorte toutefois que les extrémitez d'enhaut se terminent en pointe, comme des tentes ou des clochers : aprés quoy il fait des préparatifs pour la chasse, d'où il ne revient que la Cabanne ne soit entierement accommodée par les femmes, ausquelles il en commet le soin pendant son absence, donnant à chacune son emploi particulier. Ainsi les unes vont cüeillir des branches de sapin, [72] dont elles mettent les écorces sur des perches : d'autres cherchent du bois sec pour faire du feu : les autres apportent de l'eau pour mettre boüillir dans la chaudiere, afin de tenir le souper prêt, quand les hommes arrivent de la chasse. La femme du Chef, en qualité de Maîtresse, choisit les branches de sapin les plus tendres & les plus deliées, pour en couvrir tout le circuit du dedans de la Cabanne, reservant le milieu pour leur

servir de foïer. Elle ajuste ensuite, & proportionne les plus grandes & les plus rudes à la hauteur de la neige, lesquelles forment une espece de petite muraille ; en sorte que ce petit bâtiment paroît plûtôt une Cabanne de printems, que d'hiver, par [73] une verdure agreable que le sapin conserve long-tems sans se flaîtrir. C'est encore à elle de marquer la place d'un chacun, suivant l'âage, la qualité des personnes, & la coûtume de la nation. Celle du chef est à droite ; il la cede quelquefois par honneur & par civilité aux étrangers, les conviant même de prendre place & de se reposer sur quelques peaux d'ours, d'orignaux, de loup marin, ou sur quelques belles robes de castors dont ces sauvages se servent, comme de tapis de Turquie. Les femmes occupent toûjours les premieres places qui sont prés de la porte, afin d'estre toutes prêtes à obeïr, & à servir promptement lors qu'on leur commande.

[74] Il y a de grandes incommoditez dans ces sortes de cabannes ; car outre qu'elles sont si basses, qu'on ne s'y peut aisément tenir debout, & que de necessité il y faut estre toûjours assis ou couché ; c'est que d'ailleurs elles sont d'une froideur qui ne se peut exprimer, & la fumée qu'on est necessairement obligé de souffrir dans la compagnie de ces barbares, est quelque chose d'insuportable.

Toutes ces disgraces sans doute ne sont pas les moindre mortifications, que souffrent les Missionnaires, qui pour se faire tout à tous, à l'exemple de saint Paul, afin de gagner ces peuples à Jesus-Christ, ne laissent pas malgré tant d'incommoditez, de travailler sans relâche à la [75] conversion de ces pauvres Infideles.

Je passe sous silence plusieur sautres manieres de cabanner, qui sont en usage chez nos Gaspesiens ; parce qu'elles n'ont rien de plus considerable, que de faire extrémement souffrir ceux qui les suivent dans les bois, & qu'elles sont toutes également chetives & miserables ; mais quoy qu'il en soit, ils en font autant & même plus d'estime que de nos maisons les plus superbes & les plus commodes. C'est ce qu'ils témoignerent un jour à quelques-uns de nos Messieurs de l'Isle Percée, qui m'ayant prié de leur servir d'interprete dans une visite qu'ils souhaitoient rendre à ces Sauvages, & de leur faire concevoir, que ce se- [76] roit une chose bien plus avantageuse pour-eux de vivre & de se bâtir à nôtre maniere, furent extrémement surpris, lorsque le chef qui avoit écouté avec beaucoup de patience, tout ce que je lui avois dit de la part de ces Messieurs, me répondit en ces termes. Je m'etonne fort, que les François aient si peu d'esprit, qu'ils en font paroître dans ce que tu me viens de dire de leur part, pour nous persuader de changer nos perches, nos écorces, & nos cabannes, en des maisons de pierre & de bois, qui sont hautes & élevées, a ce qu'ils disent, comme ces arbres ! hé quoy-donc, continua-t-il, pour des hommes de cinq à six pieds de hauteur, faut-il des maisons, qui en aient soixante ou qua- [77] tre-vingts ; car enfin tu le sçai bien toy Patriarche, ne trouvons nous pas dans les nôtres toutes les commoditez, & les avantages que vous avec chez vous, comme de coucher, de boire, de dormir, de manger & de nous divertir avec nos amis, quand nous voulons ? Ce n'est pas tout, dit il, s'adressant à l'un de nos Capitaines ; mon frere, as-tu autant d'adresse & d'esprit que les Sauvages, qui portent avec-eux leurs maisons & leurs cabannes, pour se loger par tout ou bon leur semble, independamment de quelque Seigneur que ce soit ? tu n'est pas aussi brave, ni aussi vaillant que nous ; puisque quand tu voyages, tu ne peus porter sur tes épaules tes bâtimens ni tes édifices ; ainsi, il faut [78] que tu fasses autant de logis, que tu changes de demeure, ou bien que tu loges dans une maison empruntée, & qui ne t'appartient pas ; pour nous, nous nous trouvons

à couvert de tous ces inconveniens, & nous pouvons toûjours dire plus veritablement que toy, que nous sommes par tout chez nous, parceque, nous nous faisons facilement des Cabannes par tout ou nous allons, sans demander permission à personnes tu nous reproche assez mal à propos, que nôtre païs est un petit enfer, par raport à la France, que tu compares au Paradis Terrestre, d'autant qu'elle te fournit, dis-tu, toutes sortes de provisions en abondance ; tu nous dis encore que nous sommes les plus miserables, [79] & les plus malheureux de tous les hommes, vivans sans religion, sans civilité, sans honneur, sans societé, & en un mot sans aucunes regles, comme des bêtes dans nos bois & dans nos forêts, privez du pain, du vin & de mille autres douceurs, que tu possedes avec excez en Europe. Hé bien, mon frere, si tu ne sçais pas encore les veritables sentimens, que nos Sauvages ont de ton païs, & de toute ta nation, il est juste que je te l'aprenne aujourd'huy : je te prie donc de croire que tous miserables que nous paroissions à tes yeux, nous nous estimons cependant beaucoup plus heureux que toi, en ce que nous sommes tres-contens du peu que nous avons, [80] & crois encore une fois de grace, que tu te trompes fort, si tu prétens nous persuader que ton païs soit meilleur que le nostre ; car si la France, comme tu dis, est un petit Paradis Terrestre, as-tu de l'esprit de la quitter, & pourquoy abandonner femmes, enfans, parens & amis ? pourquoy risquer ta vie & tes biens tous les ans, & te hazarder temerairement en quelque saison que ce soit aux orages, & aux tempêtes de la mer, pour venir dans un païs étranger & barbare, que tu estimes le plus pauvre & le plus malheureux du monde : au reste comme nous sommes entierement convaincus du contraire, nous ne nous mettons guere en peine d'aller en France, parce que [81] nous aprehendons avec justice, d'y trouver bien peu de satisfaction, voïant par experience que ceux qui en sont originaires en sortent tous les ans, pour s'enrichir dans nos côtes ; nous croïons de plus que vous estes encore incomparablement plus pauvres que nous, & que vous n'estes que de simples compagnons, des valets, des serviteurs & des esclaves, tous maîtres, & tous grands Capitaines que vous paroissiez ; puisque vous faites trophée de nos vieilles guenilles, & de nos méchans habits de castor, qui ne nous peuvent plus servir, & que vous trouvez chez nous par la pesche de Moruë que vous faites en ces quartiers, de quoy soulager vôtre misere, & la pau- [82] vreté, qui vous accable : quant à nous, nous trouvons toutes nos richesses & toutes nos commoditez chez nous-mêmes, sans peines, & sans exposer nos vies aux dangers où vous vous trouvez tous les jours, par de longues navigations ; & nous admirons en vous portant compassion dans la douceur de nôtre repos, les inquietudes & les soins que vous vous donnez nuit & jour, afin de charger vôtre navire : nous voïons même que tous vos gens ne vivent ordinairement, que de la Morüe que vous pêchez chez nous ; ce n'est continuellement que Morüe, Morüe au matin, Morüe à midi, Morüe au soir, & toûjours Morüe, jusques là même, que si vous souhaitez quelques bons morceaux ; c'est à [83] nos dépens, & vous êtes obligez d'avoir recours aux Sauvages, que vous méprisez tant, pour les prier d'aller à la chasse, afin de vous regaler. Or maintenant dis-moi donc un peu, si tu as de l'esprit lequel des deux est le plus sage & le plus heureux ; ou celui qui travaille sans cesse, & qui n'amasse, qu'avec beaucoup de peines, de quoi vivre ; ou celuy qui se repose agreablement, & qui trouve ce qui luy est necessaire dans le plaisir de la chasse & de la pêche. Il est vray, reprit il, que nous n'avons pas toûjours eu l'usage du pain & du vin, que produit vôtre France : mais enfin avant l'arrivée des François en ces

quartiers, les Gaspesiens ne vivoient-ils pas plus long-tems qu'à present ? & si nous n'a- [84] vons plus parmi nous de ces viellards de cent trente à quarante ans, ce n'est que parce que nous prenons insensiblement vôtre maniere de vivre, l'experience nous faisant assez connoître que ceux-là d'entre nous vivent d'avantage, qui méprisans vôtre pain, vôtre vin, & vôtre eau de vie, se contentent de leur nourriture naturelle de castor, d'orignaux, de gibier & de poissons, selon l'usage de nos ancêtres & de toute la nation Gaspesienne. Aprens donc, mon frere, une fois pour toutes puisqu'il faut que je t'ouvre mon cœur, qu'il n'y a pas de Sauvage, qui ne s'estime infiniment plus heureux, & plus puissant que les François. Il finit son discours par ces dernieres paroles, disant qu'un Sauvage trouvoit sa vie pa [85] tout ; qu'il se pouvoit dire le Seigneur & le Souverain de son païs, parce qu'il y residoit autant qu'il lui plaisoit avec toute sorte de droits, de pêche & de chasse, sans aucune inquietude, plus content mille fois dans les bois & dans sa cabanne, que s'il étoit dans les Palais, & à la table des plus grands Princes de la Terre.

Quoyque l'on puisse dire de ce raisonnement, j'avoüe pour moy que je les estimerois incomparablement plus heureux que nous, & que la vie même de ces Barbares seroit capable de donner de la jalousie, s'ils avoient les instructions, les lumieres, & les mêmes moïens pour leur salut, que Dieu nous a donnés pour nous sauver, par pré- [86] ference à tant de pauvres Infideles, & par un effet de sa misericorde : car aprés tout, leur vie n'est pas traversée de mille chagrins comme la nôtre ; ils n'ont point chez-eux ces charges ni ces emplois soit de judicature, soit de guerre, qu'on recherche parmi nous avec tant d'ambition, & ne possedant rien en propre, ils n'ont aussi ni chicane ni procez, pour la succession de leurs parens ; le nom de Sergent, de Procureur, de Greffier, de Juge, & de President leur est inconnu ; toute leur ambition se termine, à surprendre, & à tuër quantité de Castors, d'orignaux, de Loup marins & d'autres bêtes fauves, afin d'en prendre la viande pour se nourrir, & la peau pour se vêtir ; ils vivent [87] d'une tres-grande union, ne se querellans, ni ne se battans jamais que dans l'ivresse ; mais au contraire, ils se soulagent reciproquement dans leur besoin les uns les autres, avec beaucoup de charité & sans interest. C'est une joie continuelle dans leurs cabannes ; la multitude des enfans ne les embarrasse point : car bien loin de s'en chagriner, ils s'estiment d'autant plus heureux & plus riches, que leur famille est plus nombreuse, ne prétendant pas que la fortune des enfans soit plus considerable que celle de leurs peres, aussi n'ont ils point toutes ces inquietudes, que nous nous donnons, pour leur amasser des biens & les élever dans le faste & dans la grandeur ; d'où vient que la nature a toûjours [88] conservé parmi-eux dans toute son integrité, cet amour conjugal, qui ne doit jamais souffrir d'alteration entre le mari & la femme par la crainte interessée d'avoir trop d'enfans, charge qu'on estime en Europe trop onereuse, mais que nos Sauvages reputent tres-honorable, tres-avantageuse, & tres-utile, celui-là étant le plus consideré dans toute la nation qui en a un plus grand nombre ; parce qu'il trouve plus de support dans sa vieillesse, & que les garçons & les filles font également dans leur condition le bonheur & la joie de ceux qui leur ont donné la vie : ils vivent enfin les uns & les autres, le pere & les enfans comme les premiers Rois de la terre, qui vivoient [89] au commencement du monde de leur chasse de leur pêche, de legume & de sagamité ou boüilli, semblable, à mon avis, au pulment que Jacob demanda à Esaü avant que de lui donner sa benediction.

## CHAPITRE VI.

*De la maniere de vivre des Gaspesiens, & de leur nourriture.*

IL est constant que nos Gaspesiens ont eu si peu de connoissance du pain & du vin, que lorsque les François arriverent la premiere fois dans leur païs, ces Barbares prirent le pain qu'on leur presenta, pour quelque mor- [90] ceau de tondre de bouleau, & se persuaderent que les François étoient également cruels & inhumains ; parce que, disoient-ils, dans leurs divertissemens ils bûvoient du sang sans repugnance ; c'est ainsi qu'ils appelloient le vin : aussi furent ils quelque tems, non seulement sans en goûter, mais même sans vouloir en aucune façon familiariser, & commercer avec une nation, qu'ils croïoient accoûtumée au sang & au carnage ; cependant à la fin, ils se sont fait peu à peu à ce breuvage, & il seroit à souhaiter, qu'ils eussent encore aujourd'hui la même horreur pour le vin & l'eau de vie qu'ils prennent jusqu'à l'ivresse au préjudice de le ur salut & du Christianisme, leur faisant commet- [91] tre des crüautez bien plus grandes, que celles qu'ils se figuroient dans la conduite des François.

Plusieurs sans doute sont surpris & ont de la peine à comprendre comment un Missionnaire peut vivre des années toutes entieres à la Sauvagesse ; j'avoüe effectivement, qu'il en coûte aussi bien des mortifications, particulierement dans les commencemens, qui sont toûjours extrémement penibles : mais enfin on en a bien-tôt surmonté toute la repugnance, quand on a des viandes aussi bonnes & aussi succulentes, que celles d'origniac, de castor, de loup marin de porc epic, de perdrix, d'outarde, de sarcelles, de canards, de becasses, de mo- [92] rüe, de saulmon, de bar, de truitte, & de quantité d'autres poissons & gibiers, qui servent de nourriture ordinaire aux Sauvages.

Les mois de Janvier & de Fevrier, sont pour l'ordinaire le tems de la penitence involontaire & du jeûne tres-rigoureux de ces Barbares, & souvent même tres funeste, vû les effets cruels & horribles qu'il cause parmi eux ; dont cependant ils pourroient facilement prevenir les fâcheuses suites, s'ils vouloient suivre l'exemple des fourmis, & des petits écureüils, qui par un instinct autant admirable qu'il est naturel, amassent avec soin dans l'êté, de quoy vivre abondamment pendant l'hyver. Mais enfin [93] nos Gaspesiens, sont de ces gens qui ne se soucient pas du lendemain, plûtôt par paresse d'amasser de bonnes provisions, que par le zele d'observer le conseil que Dieu en donne dans son saint Evangile. Ils se persuadent que quinze à vingt paquets de viande ou de poisson sechez ou boucannées à la fumée, sont plus que suffisans pour les nourrir l'espace de cinq à six mois : cependant comme ce sont des gens de bon appetit, ils consomment bien-plûtôt leurs vivres, qu'ils ne s'imaginent ; ce qui les expose assez souvent au danger de mourir de faim, faute des alimens qu'ils pourroient facilement avoir jusqu'à l'abondance s'ils s'en vouloient don-donner la peine ; mais ces [94] Barbares étant errans & vagabonds, ils ne labourent point la terre, ils ne moissonnent ni bled d'inde, ni pois, ni citroüilles, comme les Iroquois, les Hurons, les Algomquins, & plusieurs autres peuples du Canada ; ce qui les reduit quelquefois dans une si grande necessité, qu'ils n'ont plus la force ni le

courage, de sortir de leurs cabannes, pour aller chercher de quoy vivre dans les bois. C'est alors qu'il est impossible de voir sans compassion des petits innocens, qui n'aiant plus que la peau & les os, font assez connoître dans un visage tout extenué, & dans des carcasses vivantes, la faim cruelle qu'ils souffrent, par la negligence de leurs peres & meres, qui se trouvent [95] eux même obligez avec leurs malheureux enfans de manger du sang caillé, des raclures de peaux, des vieux souliers, & mille autres choses contraires à la vie de l'homme ; tout cela seroit peu, s'ils n'en venoient quelques-fois à d'autres extremitez bien plus touchantes & plus horribles.

Il est surprenant d'apprendre, qu'ils se voient souvent reduits à des excez si grand & si cruels qu'on ne les peut seulement entendre sans fremir, & la nature ne les peut souffrir sans horreur ; nous en avons veu un exemple assez deplorable à la riviere de sainte Croix, autrement dite Miramichis, dans le mois de Janvier 1680. où nos Sauvages consommerent leurs viandes, [96] & leurs poissons boucannez, bien plûtôt qu'ils ne se l'étoient imaginez ; en sorte que la saison n'étant pas encore commode pour la chasse, ni les rivieres propres pour la pêche, ils se virent reduits à souffrir tout ce qu'on peut experimenter de rude dans une famine, qui en fit mourir jusqu'au nombre de quarante à cinquante. Les François qui étoient pour lors au Fort de sainte-Croix les soulagerent autant qu'ils pûrent, dans une rencontre où l'obligation de secourir son prochain, que l'Evangile nous commande d'aimer comme nous même, paroissoit trop sensiblement, pour ne pas s'en acquitter, avec toute la compassion, & la charité possible. Madame Denis [97] donna ordre à ses Domestiques, de leur distribuer selon la necessité de chaque Cabanne, du pain, de la farine, des pois, de la viande, du poisson, & même jusques à du bled, que les plus patiens de ces pauvres affamez faisoient boüillir ; mais quelques-autres d'entr'eux ne pouvant plus supporter la faim cruelle qui les accabloit, le mangeoient tout crud : jusques-là même, qu'une pauvre femme étant morte immediatement aprés ce repas, qui fut le dernier de sa vie, on fut assez surpris l'Automne suivant, lorsqu'on vid plusieurs beaux épis de bled qui étoient venus en parfaite maturité, dans la place même où on avoit enterré cette Sauvagesse. Nous n'en pûmes donner [98] d'autres raisons que celle-ci, qui nous parut la plus juste & la plus probable : c'est qu'il faloit necessairement que ce bled qu'elle avoit mangé tout crud, eût germé dans sa carcasse ; & que son estomac n'aïant pas eu assez de force, ni de chaleur naturelle pour le digerer, il étoit venu en maturité : ce qui est tres vraisemblable, puisqu'en effet personne n'avoit jamais semé de froment en ce lieu.

Dans une consternation si grande & une desolation si generale, qui affligeoit sensiblement les François & les Sauvages, il se trouva un de nos Gaspesiens, qui ne pouvant plus souffrir la faim qui le devoroit tout vivant, fut assez barbare & cruel, pour se resoudre d'assassiner & de man- [99] ger sa femme ; laquelle penetrant dans le funeste dessein de son mari, luy inspira, pour se conserver la vie, de casser la tête & de couper la gorge à deux de leurs enfans, l'un âgé de cinq à six ans, & l'autre de sept à huit. Il est vrai, disoit cette marâtre à son mari, le cœur tout transpercé de douleur, que tu es à plaindre, & que la necessité où nous sommes est extréme : mais enfin, si tu veux tuer quelqu'un de ta famille, ne vaut-il pas mieux que nous mettions à mort quelques-uns de nos enfans, & que nous les mangions ensemble ; afin que je puisse élever & nourrir les plus petits, qui ne pourront plus vivre, si une fois ils viennent à perdre leur

mere. Elle plaida si bien sa cause en sa fa- [100] veur, que d'un commun consentement l'homme & la femme massacrerent & couperent la gorge à ces deux pauvres innocens, sans se laisser attendrir aux larmes ni aux lamentations d'une petite fille, qui conjuroit son pere & sa mere de ne la pas égorger. Elle ne put jamais obtenir cette grace de ces inhumains ; & ils reçûrent tous deux la mort, de ceux qui leur avoient donné la vie. Ils hacherent ensuite par morceaux, & mirent dans une chaudiere toute boüillante les cadavres de leurs enfans : & enfin, par une cruauté inoüie, dont le simple souvenir fait encore aujourd'hui fremir d'horreur la Nation Gaspesienne, ces monstres de nature les mangerent en la compagnie d'un de leurs [101] freres, qui fut obligé de fuir avec les autres à la riviere de Saint Jean, de peur que les Chefs de nos Sauvages les surprenant dans ce cruel festin, ne leur eussent cassé la tête ; & en effet ils furent autant indignez que surpris, à la nouvelle d'une action si noire & si barbare. Il est vrai que ces malheureux, au retour du Printems, qui se trouva tres-commode pour la chasse, étoient inconsolables, du miserable genre de mort de leurs enfans, qu'ils avoient inhumainement sacrifiez à la conservation de leur vie. Ils étoient dignes, par leurs cris, de toucher de compassion les cœurs les plus insensibles : le pere reprochoit à la mere l'excez de sa cruauté : la femme representoit à son mari son [102] peu de constance à souffrir la faim, & d'avoir été si dénaturé, que de vouloir conserver sa vie aux dépens de celle qu'ils avoient donnée l'un & l'autre à leurs enfans. Cette pauvre mere affligée luy reprochoit, les larmes aux yeux, avec des soupirs & des gemissemens capables d'attendrir un cœur de bronze ; que luy seul l'avoit forcée à consentir malgré elle, à une action si brutale & si barbare : mais aprés avoir pleuré reciproquement un malheur volontaire où il n'y avoit plus de remede, & la perte irreparable de leurs chers enfans, dont ils faisoient encore retentir les noms au milieu de leurs plaintes, ils ne pouvoient trouver assez de larmes, ni de termes pour détester & pour expri- [103] mer eux-mêmes l'énormité de leur crime. Je les ay vû moi-même, ces parens infortunez, qui avoient encore, comme des autres Caïns, l'image affreuse de leur crime abominable si presente à leur idée, qu'ils se croïoient à tout moment frapez de la même malediction que Dieu donna à ce fratricide. Effraïez qu'ils étoient sans cesse par une terreur panique qui ne les abandonnoit jamais, ils se persuadoient voir autant de boureaux qu'ils rencontroient de Sauvages : & ne pouvant trouver de sûreté en aucun lieu, pour se dérober à la juste colere de nos Gaspesiens, qui ne les regardoient plus qu'avec horreur & indignation, ils couroient les bois jour & nuit sans relâche, cherchant [104] inutilement partout un repos qu'ils ne pouvoient rencontrer nulle-part ; mais encore moins dans le fond de leur conscience, qui les boureloit & les persecutoit continuellement avec tant de cruauté, au seul souvenir de l'horreur du crime qu'ils venoient de commettre, qu'ils se crûrent enfin tout-à-fait indignes de recevoir les billets & les caracteres que je donnois aux autres Sauvages, & dont je me servois tres-utilement pour leur enseigner les Prieres, le Catechisme, & les principes de la Foi que je leur annonçois. Comme je m'apperçûs donc qu'ils n'osoient plus paroître, & qu'ils cessoient de se rendre à l'Instruction avec les autres, je tâchai de les rassûrer, & de leur persuader [105] de venir à nôtre Chapelle pour y apprendre les Prieres : ils me répondirent que c'étoit en vain ; car quelques efforts qu'ils pussent faire, disoient-ils, pour apprendre ce que je leur enseignois, jamais ils n'auroient la memoire, ni l'esprit de le retenir, jusqu'à ce que ce crime leur fût entierement remis & pardonné

de Dieu, par le ministere du grand Patriarche : c'est ainsi qu'ils appellent Monseigneur l'Evêque de Quebec, voulant, disoient-ils, se jetter à ses pieds, pour obtenir de luy l'absolution de leur crime.

Tels étoient les paroles & les sentimens de ces pauvres malheureux. Je fis tout mon possible pour les consoler, en leur promettant la protection & tout le secours que je [106] pourrois ; leur remontrant qu'à la verité leur crime étoit énorme, mais qu'enfin Dieu avoit plus de bonté & de misericorde pour eux, qu'ils n'avoient eu de malice & de cruauté, en mettant ainsi à mort ceux ausquels ils avoient donné la vie. Ils crûrent à mes paroles, & reçûrent mes billets ; bien resolus de faire & de pratiquer éxactement tout ce que je pourrois leur inspirer de bon, pour appaiser la justice de Dieu, & se concilier sa misericorde.

Voila sans doute les accidens fâcheux où s'exposent tous les ans nos Sauvages, par leur paresse, & par le peu de soin qu'ils prennent d'amasser suffisamment en Eté, dequoi éviter & prévenir mille [107] malheurs, qui les accablent tres-frequemment en Hiver ; comme ils ne le sçavent que trop bien eux-mêmes, par la funeste experience qu'ils en font. Ces Gaspesiens en tombent d'accord avec nous ; mais il semble que l'abondance qu'ils trouvent au Printems, l'Eté & l'Automne, leur fasse perdre le souvenir des disgraces qu'ils ont souffertes pendant l'Hiver.

Aprés tout, j'avouë qu'on ne peut assez admirer la constance avec laquelle ils souffrent les rigueurs de la faim ; & on peut dire qu'ils jeûnent peut-être avec autant, ou plus même de patience & d'austerité, que les Anachoretes les plus reguliers & les plus mortifiez. C'est quelque chose de surprenant, de voir qu'ils se [108] font une entiere occupation de chanter à gorge déploïée, & de danser quelque fois comme des fols, lorsqu'ils ont un appetit devorant, & qu'ils n'ont rien dequoy se rassasier ; pour perdre, disent-ils, par ce divertissement, l'envie qu'ils pourroient avoir de manger. Il ne leur est pas difficile de demeurer des trois à quatre jours à jeun, lors particulierement qu'ils sont à la chasse, & qu'ils poursuivent quelques bêtes fauves, comme l'origniac. Ils ne prennent jamais de refection devant cet éxercice, quelque penible qu'il leur soit ; mais sur le soir, quand ils sont de retour à la Cabanne, ils se regalent de tout ce qu'il y a de meilleur ; faisant boüillir, griller, ou rôtir, suivant le goût d'un chacun, [109] tout ce qu'ils ont, sans reserve, & sans aucune apprehension qu'on compte leurs morceaux ; mais au contraire, ces Barbares estiment que c'est une chose fort loüable & glorieuse, de manger beaucoup : C'est pourquoy, ne se pouvant soûmettre aux regles de la temperance & de l'œconomie, qui cependant leur seroient bien utiles & necessaires, ils font consister tout leur bonheur & mettent leur beatitude à manger avec excez, à accorder à leur appetit au-delà de ce qu'il souhaite, & à manger comme bon leur semble, tant de jour que de nuit ; se faisant un plaisir & une felicité parfaite de leurs ventres : aussi est-ce un proverbe parmi nous en Canada, qu'il ne faut que quatre à cinq bons [110] repas pour les remettre des fatigues & des langueurs de plusieurs mois de maladie.

Ils conservent inviolablement entr'eux la maniere de vivre qui étoit en usage pendant le siecle d'or ; & ceux qui se figurent un Sauvage Gaspesien comme un monstre de la nature, ne croiront que difficilement la charité avec laquelle ils se soulagent reciproquement les uns & les autres : Le fort supporte le foible avec plaisir ; & ceux qui par leur chasse font beaucoup de pelleterie, en donnent charitablement à ceux qui n'en ont point, soit pour païer leurs

dettes, soit pour se vêtir, ou avoir le necessaire à la vie. Les veuves & les orphelins reçoivent des presens ; & s'il s'en trouve quelqu'une qui [111] ne puisse nourrir ses enfans, les anciens prennent le soin de les distribuer & de les donner aux meilleurs chasseurs, avec lesquels ils vivent, ni plus ni moins que s'ils étoient les propres enfans de la Cabanne. Ce seroit un opprobre & une espece de blâme digne d'un reproche éternel, si on sçavoit qu'un Sauvage aïant des vivres en abondance, n'en eût pas fait largesse à ceux qu'il sçauroit dans la disette & dans la necessité. Voila pourquoy ceux qui tuent les premiers origniaux au commencement de Janvier & de Fevrier, tems auquel ces Peuples pâtissent davantage, d'autant qu'ils ont consommé toutes leurs provisions, se font un plaisir d'en porter eux-mêmes tres-éxactement à [112] ceux qui n'en ont point, fussent-ils éloignez de quinze à vingt lieuës : & non contens de cette liberalité, ils les convient encore, avec toute la tendresse possible, de venir en leur compagnie, & de s'approcher de leur Cabanne ; afin de les pouvoir soulager plus commodément dans leur necessité, & dans leur plus pressant besoin ; avec mille promesses de leur faire genereusement part de la moitié de leur chasse : Belle instruction, sans doute, pour ces riches impitoïables & ces cœurs de roche, qui n'ont que des entrailles de fer pour leurs semblables, & qui ne se mettent aucunement en peine de secourir la misere extréme de tant de pauvres qui gemissent, & qui souffrent la faim & la [113] nudité, pendant que ces mauvais-riches regorgent d'une infinité de biens & de richesses, dont la Providence ne les a fait que dépositaires, & ne les a mis entre leurs mains, que pour en faire un saint usage d'aumônes & de charité aux membres necessiteux du Sauveur.

La viande d'origniac est celle que nos Gaspesiens estiment davantage : ils en aiment la graisse, & l'estiment un mets si delicieux, qu'ils la boivent toute pure, avec autant de sensualité que si c'étoit la liqueur du monde la plus agreable. Ils la mangent encore toute cruë, comme quelque chose d'exquis : en un mot, il n'y a point chez eux de festin plus magnifique, que lorsque celuy qui traite donne aux con-[114] viez un pain de cacamos de neuf à dix livres. Or ce pain est une espece de graisse qui se tire des os des jambes & des cuisses des origniaux : & aprés qu'ils en ont mangé toute la moëlle, ils mettent ces os, qu'ils concassent & qu'ils pilent, jusques à presque les reduire en poudre, dans une grande chaudiere d'eau boüillante ; en sorte que tout ce qui peut rester de moëlle ou de graisse dans ces os ainsi brisez, surnage au-dessus de l'eau par la chaleur du feu. Ils l'amassent ensuite, & la conservent soigneusement, comme quelque chose d'excellent & de delicat. Quant au boüillon, il devient blanc comme du lait ; & suivant leur sentiment, ils le croient aussi pectoral qu'un [115] grand verre d'eau-de vie, ou que le meilleur de nos consommez. Ils font beaucoup plus d'état de l'origniac femelle pendant l'Hiver, que du mâle : & au contraire, ils estiment bien davantage le mâle en Eté, que la femelle ; parce qu'en effet ces animaux ont l'alternative, pour devenir gras & maigres, n'étant pas de leur nature ni de leur temperament de l'être en même tems : ce qui est encore fort commun à plusieurs autres animaux du Canada.

Si par bonheur il arrive que le chasseur tuë une femelle pendant l'Hiver, ou un mâle pendant l'Eté, il se fait alors une réjoüissance entiere dans toutes les Cabannes voisines, dans l'attente & dans l'esperance où chacun est de [116] manger délicieusement de la graisse d'origniac ; mais ils redoublent leur joie avec des cris & des chants d'allegresse, quand le Chasseur, tout victorieux de sa

prise, entre dans la Cabanne, & jette par terre, d'un serieux & d'une fierté comme s'il avoit triomphé d'un redoutable ennemi, le fardeau qu'il a apporté sur ses épaules, dans lequel sont envelopez le cœur, le roignon, la langue, les entrailles, & la graisse la plus delicate. C'est par là d'abord que ses amis & toute sa famille commencent le regale, tandis que les filles & les femmes vont avec mille marques de joie, toûjours en chantant & en dansant, querir sur leurs traineaux le reste de la viande de l'origniac que ce glorieux [117] Chasseur a laissee fort proprement ensevelie dans les neiges.

C'est à la Maîtresse de la Cabanne de ménager tout ce qu'on apporte de la chasse, si on peut dire qu'il se trouve quelque œconomie parmi des gens qui mangent presque à tout moment. Elle choisit de tous les boïaux de cet animal, ceux qui sont les plus gras, qu'elle fait boüillir, aprés les avoir fort legerement lavez, & qu'elle accommode ensuite en paquets, à peu prés comme les boudins & saucisses : c'est dequoy ils font ordinairement leurs regales les plus delicieux. Elle découpe encore en feüillet, tout ce qu'il y a de plus charnu & de plus maigre, qu'elle fait secher & boucaner à la fumée, sur des [118] perches qui forment une espece de petit échaffaut ; afin d'empêcher que leur viande ne se gâte, ni ne se corrompe. C'est ainsi que sans l'usage du sel, ni d'aucune autre épicerie, ils la conservent tres facilement quelque-tems, & leur est dans la suite, comme j'ay déja dit, d'un tres-grand secours dans les extrémitez, où ces pauvres malheureux, faute de prévoïance, ne tombent que trop souvent. On peut dire que le muffle & la langue boucanez de l'origniac, sont merveilleux & excellens ; mais c'est encore quelque chose de meilleur & de bien plus délicat, non seulement au goût de nos Sauvages, mais même à celuy de nos François, & de toutes les autres Nations qui sont en Canada, lorsqu'on mange [119] l'un & l'autre tout frais & sans les avoir exposez à la fumée : c'est aussi le festin par excellence de nos Gaspesiens. Ils font encore rôtir quelque-fois par divertissement, la tête toute entiere d'un petit élan, qu'ils appellent communément dans leur langue *Nigaiou*, sans en ôter ni le muffle, ni la langue ; mais seulement, sans autre ceremonie, ils attachent à quelque perche une corde, à laquelle cette tête est suspenduë directement devant le feu, en sorte qu'en luy donnant le branle de tems en tems avec un bâton, elle tourne & détourne à droite & à gauche sans se brûler, jusqu'à ce qu'elle soit cuite. Il n'y a rien encore de si plaisant, que de voir le foïer assiegé, pour ainsi dire, d'au- [120] tant de portions de viande embrochée dans des bâtons, qu'il y a de Sauvages dans la Cabanne ; lesquels ne pouvant se donner la patience qu'elle soit entierement rôtie, l'arrachent demi-cuite de la broche, & la mangent ainsi comme des chiens goulûment, avec une avidité surprenante, qui seroit capable de dégoûter les personnes le plus en appetit. Voila tout l'appareil que ces Barbares apportent dans leurs repas ordinaires, sans chercher ni napes, ni serviettes, tables, plats, assiettes, ni fourchettes.

Plusieurs sont en peine de sçavoir la maniere dont les Sauvages faisoient boüillir leur viande, devant qu'on leur eût donné l'usage de nos chaudieres, qu'ils trouvent aujour- [121] d'hui extrémement commodes. J'ay appris d'eux mêmes, qu'au défaut de nos chaudieres ils avoient de petits baquets ou auges de bois, qu'ils remplissoient d'eau, dans laquelle ils jettoient si souvent des pierres ardentes qu'ils faisoient rougir au feu, que l'eau peu à peu s'échaufant, boüilloit enfin par l'ardeur & la chaleur de ces roches embrasées, jusqu'à ce que la viande fût suffisamment cuite pour la manger à la Sauvagesse, c'est à dire à

demi-cruë, comme ils la mangent encore aujourd'hui, & d'une maniere même tout-à-fait dégoûtante ; car il est vrai que ces Peuples sont singuliers dans leur façon de vivre, par une malpropreté qui fait mal au cœur. Je ne puis me per- [122] suader qu'il y ait aucune Nation dans le Monde, si maussade dans le boire & dans le manger, que la Gaspesienne, si ce n'est peut-être quelques autres Peuples de ce nouveau Monde : aussi est-il vrai que de toutes les peines que les Missionnaires souffrent d'abord, pour s'accoûtumer à la maniere de vivre de ces Sauvages, afin de les instruire dans les maximes du Christianisme, celle-ci est sans doute une des plus difficiles à supporter ; puisqu'elle leur cause souvent des bondissemens de cœur. Jamais nos Gaspesiens n'écurent leur chaudiere que la premiere fois qu'ils s'en servent, à cause, disent-ils, qu'ils apprehendent le verd-de-gris, qui n'a garde de s'y attacher, quand elles sont bien graissées [123] & brûlées. Ils ne l'écument point non plus, parce qu'il leur semble que c'est ôter la graisse du pot, & autant de bien perdu ; ce qui rend la viande toute farcie d'une écume noire & épaisse, semblable à de petites boulettes, qui font à peu prés la figure d'un lait tourné : ils se contentent d'en ôter seulement les plus gros poils d'origniac, quoiqu'elle ait souvent traîné dans leur Cabanne des cinq à six jours, & que les chiens même en aïent toûjours goûté les premiers par avance. Ils n'ont point d'autres tables que la terre plate, ni d'autres serviettes pour essuïer leurs mains, que leurs souliers, ou leurs cheveux, ausquels ils s'essuïent éxactement les mains. Enfin il n'y a rien que [124] de rude, de grossier & de rebutant dans les manieres extraordinaires de vivre de ces Barbares, lesquels n'observent dans le boire ni dans le manger, aucunes regles de bienseance, ni de civilité.

La boisson ordinaire de nos Gaspesiens est l'eau naturelle qu'ils boivent avec plaisir pendant l'Eté. Pour l'Hiver, ils sont assez souvent obligez de fondre la neige dans leurs chaudieres, pour en boire l'eau, qui sent presque toûjours la fumée. Quant à l'eau d'érable, qui est la séve de l'arbre même, elle est également délicieuse pour les François & les Sauvages, qui s'en donnent au Printems à cœur joie. Il est vrai aussi qu'elle est fort agreable & abondante dans la Gaspesie ; car par une [125] ouverture assez petite, qu'on fait avec la hache dans un érable, on en fait distiler des dix ou douze pots. Ce qui m'a paru assez remarquable dans l'eau d'érable, c'est que si à force de la faire boüillir on la réduit au tiers, elle devient un veritable syrop, qui se durcit à peu prés comme le sucre, & prend une couleur rougeâtre. On en forme des petits pains, qu'on envoie en France par rareté, & qui dans l'usage sert bien souvent au défaut du sucre François. J'en ay plusieurs fois mélangé avec de l'eau-de-vie, des cloux de girofle & de la canelle ; ce qui faisoit une espece de rossoli fort agreable. L'observation est digne de remarque, qu'il faut qu'il y ait de la neige au pied de cet arbre, pour qu'il laisse [126] couler son eau sucrée ; & il refuse de donner cette douce liqueur, lorsque la neige ne paroît plus sur la terre. Mais enfin, tout ce que je puis dire de l'eau du Canada en general, c'est qu'elle est extrémement saine, bienfaisante, & beaucoup meilleure qu'en France : jamais, ou du moins rarement on s'en trouve incommodé, selon l'experience que j'en ay faite moy-même pendant plusieurs années ; aussi disons-nous en Canada, que les eaux de la Nouvelle France valent le petit vin de l'Europe.

[127] ## CHAPITRE VII.

*De l'ignorance des Gaspesiens.*

ILS ne sçavent ni lire, ni écrire : ils ont cependant assez de jugement & de memoire, s'ils vouloient avoir autant d'application qu'il en faut pour apprendre l'un & l'autre ; mais outre l'inconstance & l'instabilité de leurs esprits, qu'ils ne veulent gêner qu'autant qu'il leur plaît, ils sont encore tous dans cette fausse & ridicule creance, qu'ils ne vivroient pas long-tems, s'ils étoient aussi sçavans que les François : de-là vient qu'ils se plaisent à vivre & à mourir dans leur ignorance naturelle. [128] Quelques-uns cependant de ces Sauvages que l'on a pris la peine d'instruire, sont devenus en peu de tems Philosophes, & même assez bons Theologiens : mais aprés tout, ils sont toûjours demeurez Sauvages, n'aïant pas eu l'esprit de profiter de ces avantages considerables, dont ils se sont rendus tout-à-fait indignes, en quittant les études pour demeurer dans les bois avec leurs Compatriots, où ils ont vêcu en tres-méchans Philosophes ; preferant, par un raisonnement extravagant, la vie Sauvage à la Françoise.

J'ay rencontré dans ma Mission, deux filles de nos Gaspesiens qui sçavoient lire & écrire, parce qu'elles avoient demeuré chez les Ursulines [129] de Quebec, qui saintement animées de ce zele tout de feu qu'elles font paroître pour la gloire de Dieu & le salut des ames, retiennent chez elles les petites filles des Sauvages, ausquelles elles apprennent avec la pieté & la devotion, non-seulement à lire & à écrire, mais encore à faire d'autres ouvrages conformes à leur état.

La facilité & la metode que j'ay trouvé d'enseigner les Prieres à nos Gaspesiens, avec certains caracteres que j'ay formez, me persuadent efficacement que la pluspart se rendroient bien tôt sçavans : car enfin, je ne trouverois pas plus de difficulté à leur montrer à lire, qu'à prier Dieu par mes papiers, dans lesquels chaque lettre arbitraire signifie un mot particulier, [130] quelque-fois même deux ensemble. Ils ont tant de facilité pour concevoir cette sorte d'écriture, qu'ils apprennent dans une seule journée, ce qu'ils n'eussent jamais pû retenir en une semaine entiere sans le secours de ces billets, qu'ils appellent *Kignamotinoer*, ou *Kateguenne*. Ils conservent ces papiers instructifs avec tant de soin, & ils en font une estime si partituliere, qu'ils les mettent bien proprement dans de petits étuis de bouleau enrichis de pourcelaine, de rassade & de porc-épi. Ils les tiennent entre leurs mains comme nous faisons nos heures, pendant la sainte Messe, aprés laquelle ils les serrent dans leurs étuis. L'avantage & l'utilité principale que produit cette nouvelle [131] metode, c'est que les Sauvages s'instruisent les uns les autres, en quelque endroit qu'ils se rencontrent : ainsi le fils enseigne son pere, la mere les enfans, la femme son mari, & les enfans les vieillards, sans que le grand âge leur donne aucune repugnance d'apprendre par leurs petits neveux, & par les filles mêmes, les principes du Christianisme. Il n'est pas jusques aux plus petits Sauvages, qui n'aïant pas encore entierement l'usage de la parole, prononcent cependant du mieux qu'ils peuvent, quelques mots de ces billets qu'ils entendent dans leurs Cabannes, lorsque les Sauvages, par une sainte émulation, les lisent & les repetent ensemble. On a même souvent admiré avec [132] justice, dans nôtre Convent de Quebec, un petit

enfant d'environ sept ans, qui lisoit distinctement dans son livre les Prieres que je luy avois apprises en faisant la Mission. Il déchifroit ces caracteres avec tant de facilité & de presence d'esprit, que nos Religieux, aussi bien que les Seculiers, en furent extraordinairement surpris. Ils ne furent pas moins édifiez, voïant le pere & la mere assister à la sainte Messe, leurs heures Gaspesiennes à la main, où étoient les instructions qu'un bon Chrêtien doit sçavoir, pour assister avec merite à cet auguste Sacrifice. Ces pauvres Sauvages, qui m'avoient adopté pour leur enfant, avec les ceremonies ordinaires, étoient venus exprès de plus [133] de cent cinquante lieuës, pour me conjurer de retourner au plûtôt avec eux. Il n'y avoit que deux mois que j'étois arrivé à Quebec, pour rendre compte au Reverend Pere Valentin le Roux, nôtre Commissaire & Superieur, à present Custode des Recollets de la Province de Saint Denis en France, des Missions de la Gaspesie, Isle Percée, Ristigouche, Nipisiquis & Mizamichis, que l'obeïssance avoit confiées à mes soins. Il est vrai que j'avois été obligé de rester en nôtre Convent de Nôtre-Dame des Anges, plus long-tems que je ne m'étois proposé ; parce que le R. Pere Commissaire n'y étoit pas quand j'y arrivai.

Le même zele qu'il a fait [134] paroître toûjours avec tant d'ardeur & de succez pour la gloire de Dieu, le salut des ames, le service du Roi, & l'honneur de nôtre sainte Reforme, durant les six années qu'il a gouverné nos Missions de la Nouvelle France, l'avoit obligé de s'embarquer dans l'un des canots du Monsieur le Comte de Frontenac, qu'il eut l'honneur d'accompagner jusques au Fort du même nom, à six-vingt lieuës de Quebec ; afin d'y animer par ses paroles & par son éxemple, les R R. Peres Gabriel de la Ribourd, Zenobe Membré & Loüis Hennepin, qu'il avoit destinez pour faire avec Monsieur de la Sale, la fameuse découverte du Golfe de Mexique, par les fleuves de Saint Laurent & de Missi- [135] pé ; ou d'y aller luy-même tout le premier, s'il en eût été besoin, partager avec eux les travaux Apostoliques qu'il faloit soûtenir dans cette glorieuse entreprise.

Il fut cependant sensiblement mortifié, de ne plus trouver au fort de Frontenac nos Missionnaires, qui étoient déja partis pour la découverte du Golfe de Mexique : ensorte qu'aprés avoir fait dans cette Mission tout ce que son zele luy inspira de bien, & donné les ordres necessaires au R. Pere Luc Buisset Recollet, qui étoit resté seul au Fort pour l'instruction des François & des Sauvages ; il descendit avec Monsieur le Comte de Frontenac à Quebec, & se rendit en nôtre Convent de Nôtre-Dame des Anges.

[136] Je luy representai alors, avec cette aimable confiance que sa bonté & sa douceur naturelle inspiroit à tous les Missionnaires, ce que j'avois jugé capable d'avancer pour la gloire de Dieu & le salut des ames dans toutes ces Missions. Il en écouta favorablement les propositions ; & je peux dire avec verité, que ce voïage que je fis à Quebec, eut tout le succez que je pouvois en esperer : en sorte qu'aprés avoir fait les éxercices spirituels sous sa direction, afin d'y recevoir les lumieres & les forces necessaires pour m'acquitter dignement de mon ministere ; je me disposois déja à partir quand nos Sauvages parurent à Quebec.

Quelque inclination, cependant, que j'eus de rester en- [137] core quelques jours dans nôtre solitude de Nôtre-Dame des Anges, il falut me rendre aux instances de mes Sauvages, ausquels j'avois promis en passant, que je retournerois chez eux dans une Lune & demie, c'est à dire dans six semaines.

Affligez sensiblement qu'ils étoient de mon absence, & voïant que ce terme que je leur avois prescrit étoit déja expiré, les Chefs délibererent d'un commun accord de m'envoïer deux canots, avec ordre aux Sauvages qu'ils deputerent pour cet effet, de me témoigner le grand desir qu'ils avoient de me revoir au plûtôt, & de me demander si les Lunes de Quebec étoient plus longues que celles de Ristigouche ; c'est l'endroit où je [138] faisois alors ma Mission. Je ne pûs me défendre des instances que me firent ces Deputez, pour m'obliger à presser mon retour : & suivant plûtôt l'attrait de la grace, que les inclinations naturelles, qui m'inspiroient fortement de joüir plus long-tems de la conversation de mes Freres ; je m'embarquai enfin avec plaisir dans leurs canots ; & aprés quinze jours d'une heureuse navigation, nous arrivâmes aux Cabannes de nos Sauvages, qui me reçûrent avec tant de cordialité, d'affection & de tendresse, qu'ils firent des festins publics & particuliers, avec les harangues & les réjoüissances ordinaires, pour me témoigner, autant qu'ils en étoient capables, la joie qu'ils avoient de mon [139] retour. Que je fûs agreablement surpris, & que je ressentis de consolation dans mon cœur, lorsque voulant presenter de mes papiers à des Sauvages qui étoient venus de bien loin, exprés pour se faire instruire, ils en déchifroient déja les caracteres, avec autant de facilité que s'ils étoient toûjours demeurés parmi nous ; d'autant que ceux que j'avois auparavant instruits étant retournez chez eux, avoient enseigné ceux-ci, & avoient fait à leur égard l'office de Missionnaire.

Il est donc aisé de juger par là, de l'utilité de ces caracteres pour un Missionnaire qui veut faire beaucoup de fruit en peu de tems dans toute l'étenduë de son district : car pour peu de memoire qu'aïent [140] nos Sauvages, ils peuvent non-seulement apprendre facilement leurs Prieres par ces caracteres ; mais encore il leur est aisé, aprés les avoir oubliées, de s'en ressouvenir, en les comptant les uns aprés les autres, de la maniere qu'on leur a montré.

Enfin, je m'en suis servi si utilement l'espace de dix ans, que si le merite de l'obeïssance me destinoit aux Missions nombreuses du Golfe de Mexique nouvellement découvert par nos Religieux, qui ont eu l'honneur d'accompagner Monsieur de la Salle dans cette glorieuse entreprise, comme je fais voir dans le premier établissement de la foi dans la Nouvelle France ; je les presenterois à ces Barbares, comme le moïen [141] le plus efficace pour les instruire en fort peu de tems, des veritez les plus saintes de nôtre Christianisme.

Nôtre Seigneur m'en inspira la metode la seconde année de ma Mission, où étant fort embarrassé de quelle maniere j'enseignerois les Sauvages à prier Dieu, je m'apperçûs que quelques enfans faisoient des marques avec du charbon sur de l'écorce de bouleau, & les comptoient avec leur doigt fort éxactement, à chaque mot de Prieres qu'ils prononçoient : cela me fit croire qu'en leur donnant quelque formulaire qui soulageât leur memoire par certains caracteres, je pourrois beaucoup plus avancer, que de les enseigner en les faisant repeter plusieurs fois ce [142] que je leur disois. Je fus ravi de connoître que je ne m'étois pas trompé, & que ces caracteres que j'avois formez sur du papier, produisoient tout l'effet que je souhaitois ; en sorte qu'en peu de jours ils apprirent sans peine toutes leurs Prieres. Je ne vous puis exprimer avec quelle ardeur ces pauvres Sauvages contestoient les uns avec les autres, par une émulation digne de loüange, qui seroit le plus sçavant & le plus habile. Il est vrai qu'il en coûte beaucoup de tems & de peine, pour en former autant qu'ils en demandent, & particulierement depuis que je les ay augmentez, pour leur apprendre toutes

les Prieres de l'Eglise, avec les sacrez Misteres de la Trinité, de l'Incarna- [143] tion, du Baptême, de la Penitence & de l'Eucharistie. Mais enfin, que ne doit-on pas faire pour Dieu ? & qu'importe, de graces, en quoy & de quelle maniere emploïer nôtre tems, pourvû que le Seigneur soit glorifié, & qu'on procure avec sa gloire le salut des ames, en expliquant avec une simplicité Chrêtienne, les Misteres de nôtre Religion à de pauvres Sauvages, qui ont passé des soixante & quatre-vingt années sans invoquer jamais une seule fois pendant leur vie, le sacré nom du Seigneur ? C'est ainsi que ces Ouvriers Evangeliques retirent des portes de l'Enfer, des ames qui ne joüiroient jamais de l'éternité bienheureuse, sans le secours charitable de ces genereux Missionnaires.

[144] Comme je n'ay recherché dans ce petit formulaire, que l'utilité de mes Sauvages, & la metode la plus promte & la plus facile pour les instruire ; je m'en suis servi toûjours avec d'autant plus de plaisir, que plusieurs personnes de merite & de vertu, ont bien voulu, de vive voix & par lettres, m'exhorter à continuer ; m'obligeant même de leur en envoïer en France, pour faire voir aux curieux une nouvelle metode d'apprendre à lire, & comment Dieu se sert des moindres choses, pour manifester la gloire de son saint Nom à ces Peuples de la Gaspesie. L'approbation de Monseigneur de Saint Valier, à present Evêque de Quebec, en a autorisé l'usage plus que suffisamment : & ce digne [145] Prelat en a fait tant d'estime, qu'aprés en avoir reconnu luy-même les avantages & les utilitez dans le voïage tres-penible qu'il fit à la Cadie, il voulut bien en demander des modeles au Reverend Pere Moreau, auquel je les avois communiquez il y avoit plusieurs années. Sa Grandeur reçut avec plaisir de ce zelé Missionnaire, nos billets & nos caracteres instructifs, pour en faire part à l'un de ses Missionnaires : & je ne doute pas que ce bon Serviteur de Dieu n'en reçoive bien du soulagement dans les instructions qu'il fera aux Sauvages de sa Mission.

Nos Gaspesiens ont tant de veneration & de respect pour ces caracteres, qu'ils se font scrupule de les jet- [146] ter au feu. Lorsqu'ils se déchirent ou qu'ils se gâtent, ils m'en rapportent les fragmens ; plus religieux cent fois que les Iconoclastes, qui par une impieté sacrilege brisoient les Images les plus sacrées. Ces Peuples même n'ont pû voir sans se scandaliser, la manie d'une Sauvagesse qui les jetta au feu, en dépit de ce que je l'avois chassée de la Priere, pour une faute considerable qu'elle avoit commise.

Son incartade étant trop extraordinaire & trop scandaleuse parmi un Peuple qui commençoit déja à avoir beaucoup de veneration pour les instructions du Christianisme, je crûs que j'étois obligé de témoigner par certaines formalitez conformes au genie [147] des Sauvages, le ressentiment que j'en avois conçû ; afin que mon silence ne donnât pas occasion à quelque autre d'en faire autant.

Je fus donc à sa Cabanne, où je trouvai son pere avec quelques autres Sauvages, qui furent assez surpris de me voir entrer, avec une contenance qui marquoit la douleur que j'avois dans le cœur. Ils me prierent plusieurs fois de leur en dire le sujet, que j'affectois de leur dissimuler par mon silence : ils s'étonnerent de me voir remuer les cendres de leur foïer, avec autant d'application que si j'y eusse perdu quelque chose de la derniere consequence, & en emporter trois ou quatre pincées dans mon mouchoir, faisant des soupirs à la Sauvagesse, *akahie*, [148] *akahié*. Je luy dis en sortant de leur Cabanne qu'ils

ne devoient pas être surpris de mon silence ; puisque mon cœur pleuroit amérement ; qu'il versoit des larmes de sang, depuis que sa fille avoit jetté dans le feu les *oukate guenne Kignamatinoër :* Qu'à la verité je paroîtrois peu sensiblement touché de cette insulte, si ce n'étoit que de simple papier ; mais que j'étois inconsolable pour l'injure qu'elle avoit faite à la Priere de Jesus, qui avoit été griévement offensé par cette action scandaleuse : & qu'enfin j'exposerois ces cendres, que je croïois être celles de mes *oukate guenne*, à la porte de la Chapelle, où sa fille n'entreroit jamais, jusqu'à ce qu'elle les eût détrempées de ses larmes, & qu'elle [149] n'eût blanchi de ses pleurs le mouchoir, qui par la noirceur qu'il en avoit contracté, marquoit évidemment l'énormité de son attentat, qui étoit capable d'attirer la haine & la colere de Dieu sur toute la Nation : Que pour mon particulier, je faisois état de les quitter ; puisque je ne pouvois vivre, si on ne ressuscitoit la Priere qu'on avoit fait mourir dans le feu.

Ces paroles prononcées de la maniere dont il faut parler aux Sauvages en semblable rencontre, firent tout l'effet que j'en attendois : car ils parurent tous si consternez, qu'ils se persuaderent que j'avois déja fermé pour toûjours la porte de la Chapelle, qu'ils appellent la Cabanne de Jesus ; & que j'étois absolument re- [150] solu de refuser le Baptême aux Sauvages, que j'avois auparavant disposez pour recevoir dignement le premier de nos Sacremens. Ils s'assemblerent tous ensemble, & vinrent en foule me conjurer, au nom du Dieu que je leur annonçois, de ne les pas abandonner ; me disant que mon chagrin étoit juste, à la verité, mais que je sçavois bien que cette fille n'avoit pas d'esprit ; & qu'enfin ils feroient tous en sorte, qu'elle repareroit entierement la faute qu'elle avoit commise. Ils obligerent en effet cette Sauvagesse à me venir trouver le lendemain d'un grand matin, pour me témoigner publiquement, en presence de tous les Sauvages, le déplaisir sensible qu'elle avoit dans l'ame, d'a- [151] voir brûlé ses *Oukate guenne*, dans lesquels étoit la Priere de Jesus ; voulant, me disoit-elle, luy faire une amende honorable & reparation d'honneur, par une conduite toute sainte & toute opposée aux déreglemens de sa vie passée. Elle me conjura, avec toutes les instances possibles, de luy vouloir bien permettre d'assister avec les autres au saint Sacrifice de la Messe ; mais je luy refusai cette grace pour quelques jours, afin de luy faire mieux concevoir par là, le scandale qu'elle avoit donné à toute la Nation.

Vous voïez par là l'estime que nos Sauvages font de mes *Oukate guenne Kignatimonoër*, que nous appellons, comme j'ay déja dit, papiers ou caracteres instructifs : ils n'ont [152] pas moins d'admiration pour nos livres, & principalement pour nos lettres, dont ils sont les porteurs lorsque nous écrivons à nos amis. Ils s'imaginent qu'il y a de l'enchantement & de la jonglerie, ou que cette lettre a de l'esprit ; puisque, disent-ils, elle a la vertu de dire à celuy qui la reçoit, tout ce qui se dit & tout ce qui se fait de plus caché & de plus secret.

Quoique nos Gaspesiens soient dans une ignorance si grossiere, qu'il ne sçachent, comme nous avons dit, ni lire, ni écrire, ils ont cependant quelque connoissance de la grande & de la petite Ourse, quils appellent la premiere *Mouhinne*, & la seconde *Mouhinchiche*, qui veut dire effectivement en nôtre langue, la [153] grande & la petite Ourse. Ils disent que les trois gardes de l'Etoile du Nord, est un canot où trois Sauvages sont embarquez, pour surprendre cette Ourse ; mais que par malheur ils ne l'ont pû encore joindre.

Ils ont beaucoup d'industrie, pour faire sur de l'écorce une espece de carte, qui marque éxactement toutes les rivieres & ruisseaux d'un Païs dont ils veulent faire la description : ils en marquent au juste tous les endroits ; en sorte qu'ils s'en servent avec succez, & qu'un Sauvage qui la possede fait de longs voïages sans s'égarer.

Ils connoissent cinq sortes de vents, sçavoir le Nord, le Sud, le Nord-est, le Nord oüest, & le Sud-oüest. Ils ont [154] l'idée si juste, que pourvû qu'ils voient le Soleil, ils ne s'écartent jamais de leur route ; & connoissent si précisément toutes les rivieres, que pour peu qu'on leur indique quelque Cabanne, fût-elle éloignée de quatre-vingt ou cent lieuës, ils la trouvent à point nommé, quoiqu'il faille traverser des forêts fort épaisses : Mais quand la nuit les surprend, ou que les broüillards cachent le Soleil, alors ils sont bien embarrassez, quelques remarques naturelles qu'ils trouvent faites sur certains arbres, & quelque mousse ou branches qui panchent du côté du Nord, & qui leur servent de regle dans leurs voïages au défaut du Soleil ; car si-tôt que l'obscurité survient ils perdent la [155] tramontane. Ils ne reglent leurs lieuës que par les pointes & les caps qui se trouvent le long des rivieres ou des côtes. Ils les comptent & les mesurent encore par la longueur du tems qu'ils mettent à leur voïage, & par le nombre des nuits qu'ils sont obligez de coucher en chemin ; ne comptant point le jour de leur départ, ni celuy de leur arrivée.

Ils ne sçavent point compter que jusques au nombre de dix : ainsi quand ils veulent dire vingt, ils disent deux fois dix ; pour dire trente, ils disent trois fois dix ; & ainsi du reste.

Lorsqu'ils veulent signifier un nombre extraordinaire, ils se servent des mêmes expressions que nos pre- [156] miers Peres, montrant les feüilles des arbres, les grains de sable, & les cheveux de leur tête ; expression dont Dieu luy-même s'est servi, lorsque promettant à Abraham une posterité nombreuse, il déclara qu'il luy susciteroit des enfans en aussi grand nombre que les étoiles sont au firmament, & les grains de sable sur les rivages de la mer. David même ne se sert point d'autre expression pour marquer le nombre de ses pechez, que par celuy de ses cheveux : & ce fut aussi de cette maniere de parler dont quelques uns de nos Gaspesiens qui étoient venus en France se servirent, pour marquer à leurs Compatriotes, lorsqu'ils en furent de retour, le grand nombre de Peuple [157] qu'ils y avoient vû.

Ils comptent les années par les Hivers, les mois par les Lunes, les jours par les nuits ; les heures du matin, à proportion que le Soleil avance dans son meridien ; & celles de l'aprés midi, selon qu'il décline, & qu'il s'approche de son couchant. Ils donnent trente jours à toutes les Lunes, & reglent l'année sur certaines observations naturelles qu'ils font sur le cours du Soleil & des saisons. Ils disent que le Printems est venu, lorsque les feüilles commencent à pousser, que les outardes paroissent, que les faons d'orignaux sont d'une certaine grandeur dans le ventre de leur mere, & que les loups marins font leurs petits : ils connoissent l'Eté, lorsque les saumons [158] montent les rivieres, & que les outardes quittent leurs plumes : ils connoissent la saison de l'Automne, quand le gibier retourne du Nord au Midi : pour l'Hiver, ils en sçavent les approches par la rigueur du froid, lorsque les neiges sont abondantes sur la terre, & que les ours se retirent dans le creux des arbres, d'où ils ne sortent que le Printems, felon la remarque que nous en ferons dans la suite.

Nos Gaspesiens donc divisent les années en quatre saisons, par quatre tems

differens : le Printems s'appelle *Paniah*, l'Eté *Nibk*, l'Automne *Taoüak*, & l'Hiver *Kesic*. Ils ne comptent que cinq Lunes d'Eté, & cinq d'Hiver pour toute l'année, comme il étoit [159] en usage anciennement parmi les Romains, avant que Jules Cesar l'eût divisée en douze mois, un an avant sa mort. Ils confondent une Lune du Printems avec celles de l'Eté, & une de l'Automne avec celles de l'Hiver ; parce qu'en effet il est vrai de dire, qu'il y a peu de Printems & d'Automne dans la Gaspesie, d'autant que l'on y passe insensiblement du froid au chaud, & du chaud au froid, qui est tres-rigoureux. Ils n'ont point de semaines reglées ; s'ils en divisent quelques-unes, c'est par le premier & le second quartier, le plein, & le decours de la Lune. Tous leurs mois ont des noms fort significatifs : ils commencent les années par l'Automne, qu'ils appellent *Tkours*, qui veut dire [160] que les rivieres commencent à se glacer ; c'est proprement le mois de Novembre. *Bonodemeguiche*, qui est celuy de Decembre, signifie que le ponamon monte dans les rivieres : ils pêchent ce poisson à la ligne, faisant un trou dans la glace. Et ainsi des autres mois, qui ont tous leur signification particuliere.

## CHAPITRE VIII.

### *De la Langue des Gaspesiens.*

LA langue Gaspesienne n'a rien du tout de commun dans ses expressions, non plus que dans sa signification, avec celles de nôtre Europe : & il semble que la confusion des langues que Dieu fit naître au- [161] trefois, pour detruire & renverser de fond en comble cette entreprise fameuse & temeraire, par laquelle les hommes ne projetoient pas moins que de joindre le Ciel à la Terre, par l'élevation de la tour de Babel, soit parvenuë jusques aux Nations nombreuses des Sauvages de la Nouvelle France ; puisque parmi une infinité de langues differentes qui regnent par tout ces Peuples, nos Gaspesiens si distinguent des Montagniez, Soquoqui, Abennaqui, Hurons, Algomquins, Iroquois, & des autres Nations de ce nouveau Monde, par un langage qui leur est singulier.

C'est aussi de cette singularité que nous pouvons dire que la langue Gaspesienne est tres- [162] belle & tres-riche dans ses expressions ; car elle n'est pas si sterile que les langues Europeanes, qui ont recours à une repetition frequente des mêmes termes, pour expliquer plusieurs choses differentes. Chaque mot du Gaspesien a sa signification particuliere & specifique ; ce qui paroît admirablement bien dans leurs harangues, qui sont toûjours tres-élegantes.

Cette langue n'a aucun méchant accent : on la prononce librement & tres-facilement ; il ne la faut point tirer du fond de l'estomac, commes celles des Hurons, des Suisses, ou des Allemans. Nos Sauvages conviennent avec les Grecs & les Latins, en ce qu'ils usent toûjours du singulier, & presque jamais, [163] ou du moins tres-rarement du pluriel, quand même ils parlent à leurs Missionnaires, ou à quelque autre personne considerable ; s'exprimant par le mot de *kir*, qui veut dire toi, soit que l'enfant parle à son pere, la femme à son mari, & le mari à sa femme.

Ils ont beaucoup de difficulté à prononcer la lettre *r*, qu'ils font ordinairement sonner comme *l* ; ainsi au lieu de dire mon pere, ils disent mon pele : celle de l'*u* se change en *ou* ; comme pour dire vertu, ils diront vertou.

Les noms que nos Gaspesiens se donnent les uns aux autres, ou que le pere & la mere imposent à leurs enfans, sont tous fort significatifs : ils imitent nôtre premier pere Adam, qui a donné à toutes les [164] creatures des noms conformes à la proprieté de leur être. Ceux de nos Sauvages expriment & marquent ou les belles actions, ou les inclinations naturelles & prédominantes de ceux qui les reçoivent ; à peu prés comme les Romains, dont les noms étoient tous significatifs : en effet, les uns furent appellez Lucius, pour avoir été nez au point du jour ; les autres Cesar, parce qu'à la naissance du premier de ce nom, on ouvrit par une incision le côté de la mere, pour donner la vie à l'enfant. Ainsi nos Sauvages, s'ils sont bons chasseurs, s'appellent *Smagnis*, ou *Koucdedaoui*, qui veut dire Emerillion ; & ainsi du reste.

## [165] CHAPITRE IX.

### *De la Religion des Gaspesiens.*

LES Gaspesiens, si on en excepte ceux qui ont reçû la Foi de Jesus-Christ avec le Baptême, n'ont jamais bien connu aucune Divinité ; puisqu'ils ont vêcu jusques aujourd'hui sans Temples, sans Prêtres, sans sacrifices, & sans aucune marque de Religion : en sorte que si on peut juger du passé par le present, il est aisé d'inferer que s'ils ont adoré quelque Divinité, ils luy ont témoigné si peu de veneration & de respect, qu'ils ont été veritablement insensibles & infideles en matiere de Religion ; si ce [166] n'est toutefois à l'égard du Soleil, qu'ils ont adoré & qui a toûjours été l'objet constant de leur culte, de leurs hommages & de leur adoration. Ils ont crû que cet astre lumineux, qui par ses influences admirables & ses effets merveilleux fait l'ornement & toute la beauté de la Nature, en étoit aussi le premier auteur ; & que par consequent ils étoient obligez, par reconnoissance, de conserver tous les sentimens de respect dont ils étoient capables, pour un astre qui leur faisoit tant de bien par sa presence, & dont l'éloignement, pendant les obscuritez de la nuit, causoit le deüil à toute la Nature.

Le culte qu'ils rendoient au Soleil n'étoit pas le sacrifice [167] des Mexicains, qui offroient tous les ans à leurs Idoles plus de vingt mille cœurs de leurs petits enfans ; ni celuy des Ethiopiens, qui benissoient le Soleil à son Levant, & qui le maudissoient avec mille imprecations dans son Couchant.

Plus religieux cent fois que ces Peuples extravagans & & cruels, nos Gaspesiens sortoient regulierement de leur Cabanne pour le salüer, lorsqu'il commençoit à darder ses premiers raïons, ce qu'ils observoient aussi inviolablement à son Couchant ; ce tems, dans leur opinion, étant le plus favorable où ces Courtisans du Soleil esperoient de le rendre propice à leurs vœux, aprés luy avoir exposé leurs necessitez & leurs besoins.

[168] Ils n'observoient point d'autres ceremonies, que de tourner la face vers

le Soleil : ils commençoient d'abord leur adoration par le salut ordinaire des Gaspesiens, qui est de dire par trois fois *Ho, ho, ho ;* aprés quoy, faisant de profondes reverences avec quelques agitations des mains au-dessus de leur tête, ils demandoient ce dont ils avoient besoin : qu'il conservât leurs femmes & leurs enfans : qu'il leur donnât la force de vaincre & de triompher de leurs ennemis : qu'il leur accordât une chasse abondante en orignaux, castors, martes, & en loutres ; avec une grosse pêche de toutes sortes de poissons : enfin ils demandoient la conservation de leur vie, avec un grand nombre d'an- [169] nées, & une longue posterité.

Voila ce que j'ai vû observer à un certain vieillard de cette Nation, qui en mourant, ce me semble, a emporté avec luy tout ce qui restoit de superstition & de faux culte d'une Religion assez mal observée ; puisque depuis luy je n'ai vû, ni ne sçache de Gaspesien qui ait fait cette sorte de ceremonie.

C'est-là l'idée generale que j'ai conçûë de la Religion de nos Gaspesiens ; parce que dans le particulier j'ai trouvé auprés de certains Sauvages, que nous appellons Porte-Croix, une matiere suffisante pour nous faire conjecturer & croire même que ces Peuples n'ont pas eu l'oreille fermée à la voix des Apôtres, dont le [170] son a retenti par toute la terre : puisqu'ils ont parmi eux, tout infideles qu'ils soient, la Croix en singuliere veneration, qu'ils la portent figurée sur leurs habits & sur leur chair ; qu'ils la tiennent à la main dans tous leurs voïages, soit par mer, soit par terre ; & qu'enfin ils la posent au dehors & au dedans de leurs Cabannes, comme la marque d'honneur qui les distingue des autres Nations du Canada.

Ces Sauvages demeurent à la riviere de Mizamichiche, que nous avons depuis honorée du titre auguste de Sainte-Croix, au bruit du canon, & de mille acclamations de joie & de réjoüissance, tant des François, que des Sauvages.

Comme j'estime que cette [171] remarque est une des plus considerables de ma Relation, j'ai crû qu'aprés la perquisition tres-éxacte que j'en ai faite pendant les douze années de Mission que j'ai demeuré parmi ces Peuples, je devois satisfaire au desir & à la priere de plusieurs personnes, qui m'ont conjuré de mettre au jour cette Histoire ; afin de faire connoître au Public l'origine du culte de la Croix chez ces Infideles, son interruption, & son retablissement.

## [172] CHAPITRE X.

### *De l'origine du culte de la Croix, chez les Gaspesiens dits Porte-Croix.*

JE ne sçai quel jugement vous ferez de la maniere que nos Sauvages disent avoir reçû la Croix, selon la tradition de leurs ancêtres ; qui porte que leur Païs étant affligé d'une maladie tres dangereuse & pestilentielle, qui les reduisoit dans une extréme disette de toutes choses, & qui en avoit déja mis plusieurs dans le tombeau ; quelques vieillards de ceux qu'ils estimoient les meilleurs, les plus sages & les plus considerables s'endormirent, tous ac- [173] cablez de langueur & de chagrin, de voir une desolation si generale, & la ruine prochaine de toute la Nation Gaspesienne, si elle n'étoit promtement soulagée par un

puissant secours du Soleil, qu'ils reconnoissent, comme nous avons dit, pour leur Divinité. Ce fut, disent-ils, dans ce sommeil plein d'amertume, qu'un homme beau par excellence leur apparut, avec une Croix à la main, qui leur dit de prendre bon courage, de s'en retourner chez eux, de faire des Croix semblables à celle qu'on leur montroit, & de les presenter aux Chefs des Familles ; les assûrant que s'ils les recevoient avec estime, ils y trouveroient indubitablement le remede à tout leurs maux. [174] Comme les Sauvages sont credules aux songes jusqu'à la superstition, ils ne negligerent pas celuy-ci, dans leur extréme necessité : ainsi ces bons vieillards retournerent aux Cabannes, d'où ils étoient partis le jour precedent. Ils firent une assemblée generale de tout ce qui restoit d'une Nation mourante ; & tous ensemble conclurent, d'un commun accord, que l'on recevroit avec honneur le sacré signe de la Croix qu'on leur presentoit du Ciel, pour être la fin de leur misere, & le commencement de leur bonheur : comme il arriva en effet, puisque la maladie cessa, & que tous les affligez qui porterent respectueusement la Croix furent gueris miraculeusement : Plus heureux mille [175] fois que les Peuples de Bizance, dont la Ville fut presque toute dépeuplée de ses Habitans, par la peste qui avoit infecté toute la Sicile & la Calabre en l'année sept cens quarante-huit.

L'Histoire nous apprend que l'on voïoit de certaines Croix bleuës & reluisantes sur les habits des personnes, & que tous ceux qui en étoient marquez mouroient subitement de la peste, au grand étonnement de tout le monde.

La Croix ne fut pas si fatale, ni d'un si mauvais augure à nos pauvres Gaspesiens : elle fut plûtôt dans leur Païs, comme l'Arc-en-ciel que Dieu fit paroître autrefois à la face de tout l'Univers, pour consoler le genre humain, avec [176] promesse de ne le plus punir d'un second deluge ; & c'est ainsi que la Croix arrêta tout court ce torrent de maladie & de mortalité qui desoloit ces Peuples, & leur fut un signe efficace & rempli d'une merveilleuse fecondité de graces & de benedictions. Les avantages miraculeux qu'ils en reçûrent, leur en firent esperer de bien plus considerables dans la suite ; c'est pourquoy ils se proposerent tous, de ne decider aucune affaire, ni d'entreprendre aucun voïage sans la Croix.

Aprés donc la resolution prise dans leur Conseil, qu'ils porteroient toûjours la Croix, sans en excepter même les petits enfans, pas un Sauvage n'eût jamais osé paroître de- [177] vant les autres, sans avoir en sa main, sur sa chair, ou sur ses habits, ce sacré signe de leur salut : en sorte que s'il étoit question de décider quelque chose de consequence touchant la Nation, soit pour conclure la paix, ou déclarer la guerre contre les ennemis de la Patrie, le Chef convoquoit tous les Anciens, qui se rendoient ponctuellement au lieu du Conseil ; où étant tous assemblez, ils élevoient une Croix haute de neuf à dix pieds, ils faisoient un cercle & prenoient leur place, avec chacun leur Croix à la main, laissant celle du Conseil au milieu de l'Assemblée. Ensuite le Chef prenant la parole, faisoit ouverture du sujet pour lequel il les avoit convoquez au Conseil ; & tous [178] ces Porte-Croix disoient leur sentimens, afin de prendre des mesures justes, & une derniere resolution sur l'affaire dont il s'agissoit. Que s'il étoit question d'envoïer quelque Deputé à leurs voisins, ou à quelque-autre Nation étrangere, le Chef nommoit & faisoit entrer dans ce cercle, celuy de la jeunesse qu'il connoissoit le plus propre pour l'éxecution de leur projet : & aprés luy avoir dit publiquement le choix qu'on avoit fait de sa personne pour le sujet qu'on

luy communiquoit, il tiroit de son sein une Croix admirablement belle, qu'il tenoit envelopée dans ce qu'il pouvoit avoir de plus precieux ; & la montrant avec reverence à toute l'Assemblée, il faisoit, par une ha- [179] rangue prémeditée, le recit des graces & des benedictions que toute la Nation Gaspesienne avoit reçûës par le secours de la Croix. Il ordonnoit ensuite au Deputé de s'approcher, & de la recevoir avec reverence ; & la luy mettant au col : Va, luy disoit-il, conserves cette Croix, qui te preservera de tous dangers auprés de ceux ausquels nous t'envoïons. Les Anciens approuvoient par leurs acclamations ordinaires d'*hoo*, *hoo*, *hoo*, ce que le Chef avoit dit ; souhaitant toute sorte de prosperité à ce Deputé, dans le voïage qu'il alloit entreprendre pour le service de sa Nation.

Cet Ambassadeur donc sortoit du Conseil, la Croix au col, comme la marque hono- [180] raire & le caractere de son Ambassade : il ne la quittoit que le soir, pour la mettre sur sa tête, dans la pensée qu'elle chasseroit tous les méchans esprits pendant son repos. Il la conservoit toûjours avec soin, jusqu'à l'accomplissement de sa negociation, qu'il la remettoit entre les mains du Chef, avec les mêmes ceremonies qu'il l'avoit reçûë, en plein Conseil ; où devant toute l'Assemblée, il faisoit rapport de l'issuë de son voïage.

Enfin, ils n'entreprenoient rien sans Croix : le Chef la portoit luy-même à la main, en forme de bâton, lorsqu'il marchoit en raquettes ; & il la plaçoit dans le lieu le plus honorable de sa Cabanne. S'ils s'embarquoient sur l'eau [181] dans leurs petits canots d'écorce, ils y mettoient une Croix à chaque bout ; croïant religieusement qu'elle les preserveroit du naufrage.

Voila quels étoient les sentimens d'estime & de veneration de nos anciens Gaspesiens, pour la Croix, qui subsistent encore aujourd'hui religieusement dans les cœurs de nos Porte-Croix ; puisqu'il n'y en a pas un qui ne la porte dessus ses habits, ou dessus sa chair. Les langes & les berceaux des petits enfans en sont toûjours ornez : les écorces de la Cabanne, les canots & les raquettes en sont toutes marquées.

Les femmes enceintes la figurent avec le porc-épi dessus l'endroit de la couverture qui cache leur sein, pour [182] mettre leur fruit sous la protection de la Croix. Enfin il n'y en a guere qui ne conserve precieusement en son particulier, une petite Croix faite avec de la pourcelaine & de la rassade, qu'il garde & qu'il estime à peu prés comme nous faisons les Reliques ; jusques-là même, que ces Peuples la preferent à tout ce qu'ils ont de plus riche & de plus precieux.

Une Sauvagesse nommée Marie Joseph, que le Reverend Pere Claude Moreau, le plus ancien de nos Missionnaires, avoit baptisée, en est une preuve convaincante. Faussement allarmée, aussi-bien que les autres Sauvages avec lesquels elle étoit cabannée, & croïant que les Iroquois étoient entrez dans le [183] Païs, pour desoler une troisiéme fois la Nation Gaspesienne, elle s'embarqua avec tant de precipitation dans son canot d'écorce, pour traverser la riviere, que l'aïant abandonné au gré du courant, elle s'égara volontairement dans les bois, pour éviter la fureur de ses ennemis. La faim & la necessité que cette pauvre femme ressentit étoient si grandes, qu'elle s'estima encore heureuse de trouver dans ces deserts, des racines qui luy servirent de nourriture pendant les dix ou douze jours de son égarement. Accablée de douleur dans cette vaste solitude, elle n'avoit point d'autre consolation que sa Croix ; elle ne la quitta jamais ; jusques-là même qu'étant obligée de repasser la ri- [184] viere

à la nage, pour se rendre aux Cabannes des Sauvages, qui la croïoient morte, elle aima mieux renoncer & delaisser le peu qu'elle avoit, que d'abandonner sa Croix, qu'elle mit entre ses dents, & se rendit ainsi aux Cabannes : disant qu'il n'y avoit rien de plus precieux que la Croix, puisqu'elle l'avoit preservée d'une infinité de dangers ; qu'elle luy avoit procuré toute sorte de consolation dans ses disgraces ; & qu'enfin la vie luy paroîtroit tout-à-fait indifferente, s'il faloit qu'elle vêcût sans la Croix.

On connoît assez les lieux de la sepulture de ces Peuples, par les Croix qu'ils plantent sur leurs tombeaux ; & leurs Cimetieres, distinguez par ce signe de salut, paroissent plû- [185] tôt Chrêtiens, que Sauvages : ceremonie qu'ils observent autant de fois qu'il meurt quelqu'un de la Nation des Porte-Croix, fût-il éloigné de cent lieuës de l'endroit où se fait ordinairement leur sepulture.

Les lieux de pêche & de chasse les plus considerables sont distinguez par les Croix qu'ils y plantent ; & on est agreablement surpris, en voïageant dans leur Païs, de rencontrer de tems en tems des Croix sur le bord des rivieres, à double & à trois croisées, comme celles des Patriarches. En un mot, ils font tant d'estime de la Croix, qu'ils ordonnent qu'elle soit enterrée avec eux dans un même cercüeil, aprés leur mort ; dans la croïance que cette Croix leur [186] fera compagnie dans l'autre monde, & qu'ils ne seroient pas connus de leurs ancêtres, s'ils n'avoient avec eux la marque & le caractere honorable qui distingue les Porte Croix, de tous les autres Sauvages de la Nouvelle France.

Comme cette Nation Gaspesienne des Porte-Croix a été presque toute détruite, tant par la guerre qu'elle a euë avec les Iroquois, que par les maladies qui ont infecté ce Païs, & qui par trois à quatre fois en ont fait mourir un fort grand nombre, ces Sauvages se sont insensiblement relâchez de cette premiere ferveur de leurs ancêtres : tant il est vrai que les pratiques les plus saintes & les plus religieuses, par une certaine fatalité annexée aux choses hu- [187] maines, souffrent toûjours beaucoup d'alteration, si elles ne sont animées & conservées par le même esprit qui leur a donné la naissance. Enfin, quand je fus dans leur Païs pour commencer ma Mission, je trouvai des Peuples qui n'avoient plus que l'ombre de la coûtume de leurs anciens : Ils manquoient de respect pour la Croix ; ils avoient aboli l'usage des Assemblées Croisées, où la Croix étant au milieu du cercle & du Conseil, comme nous avons dit, ils décidoient en dernier ressort des affaires de la Nation. Mais au reste, nous avons travaillé heureusement, pour faire renaître dans le cœur & dans l'esprit de ces Sauvages, l'amour & l'estime qu'ils devoient conserver inviolable- [188] ment pour ce sacré signe de leur salut : & le Ciel versa avec abondance la plenitude de ses benedictions, sur le zele du R. P. Emanuel Jumeau nôtre cher Compagnon Missionnaire, qui eut la consolation de voir nos Gaspesiens plus affectionnez que jamais au culte de la Croix, aprés y avoir emploïé soigneusement tous ses soins, & le talent que Dieu luy a donné, pour la conversion de ces pauvres Infideles. Ce bon Religieux, que j'avois autrefois introduit dans le Noviciat de nôtre Convent d'Arras, le jour même que j'en partis pour le Canada, m'avoit plusieurs fois écrit, pour me témoigner le zele que Dieu luy donnoit pour le salut des ames ; & que la plus grande de toutes ses [189] consolations, me disoit il, seroit de mourir genereusement au milieu des bois & des forêts du Canada, en annonçant l'Evangile de Jesus-Christ aux Sauvages. Il exposa le desir qu'il en avoit, au Reverend Pere Provincial ; & aprés en avoir

reçû l'obedience, qu'il luy demanda avec beaucoup de ferveur, il s'embarqua à la Rochelle pour le Canada, & vint ainsi me soulager dans les éxercices penibles & laborieux de la Mission que je faisois à nos Porte-Croix. Il apprit la langue en tres-peu de tems, à la faveur du Dictionnaire que j'en avois composé ; en sorte qu'il fut bien-tôt en état d'instruire ces Infideles.

Quelque inclination que j'eus de demeurer plus long- [190] tems avec cet aimable Missionnaire, je fus toutefois obligé de me priver de cette consolation : jugeant qu'il étoit à propos, pour la gloire de Dieu, de nous separer ; afin de me rendre utile à plusieurs autres Sauvages, qui m'avoient suplié par leurs Ambassadeurs, d'aller chez eux annoncer l'Evangile de Jesus-Christ.

Nous fixâmes donc, d'un commun accord, le jour de nôtre separation. Les Porte-Croix, qui en avoient appris la nouvelle, s'assemblerent à la Chapelle, pour assister aux Prieres que nous devions faire devant nôtre départ. Ils s'efforcerent à l'envi les uns des autres, de me donner des marques sinceres de leur amitié, en me témoignant un sensible regret de ce que je les quittois. [191] Nos Sauvages ne m'abandonnerent point : & quelque chagrin qu'ils eussent dans le cœur, ils me le dissimulerent cependant, autant qu'ils en furent capables ; soit pour ne pas augmenter la peine que j'avois moi-même de les quitter ; soit parce que je leur promettois de les revoir aussi-tôt que j'aurois achevé la Mission que j'allois commencer pour la conversion de leurs Freres.

Je leur fis, avant que de nous separer, une harangue premeditée, dans laquelle leur aïant exposé les peines que j'avois prises pour les instruire dans les maximes du Christianisme, je leur témoignai que je n'en voulois point de reconnoissance plus agreable, que le bon usage qu'ils fe- [192] roient de mes instructions. Je leur fis connoître encore, l'avantage que je leur avois procuré, en leur donnant un Missionnaire aussi zelé pour leur salut, que le Pere Emanuel ; & l'obligation étroite qu'ils avoient sur tout, d'embrasser & de conserver le Christianisme, avec plus de pieté que les autres Sauvages de ce nouveau Monde, à cause de cette grace miraculeuse qu'ils avoient reçûë du Ciel par préference à tant d'autres Nations, comme le signe & le gage sacré de leur salut. Enfin, aprés les avoir exhorté de tout mon cœur, par le merite de la Croix, que je tenois en main, & que j'embrassois souvent avec reverence, d'être toûjours fideles à Dieu, & d'avoir pour leur Mission- [193] naire les mêmes soins, les mêmes respects & les mêmes amitiez qu'ils avoient eûës pour moi ; je conjurai le Pere Emanuel Jumeau, par tout ce que je luy pûs dire de plus tendre & de plus touchant, de perseverer constament à les instruire des veritez de nôtre sainte Religion. Il falut enfin nous separer, aprés avoir imploré le secours du Ciel pour l'heureux succez de nos Missions. Je pris donc congé de nos François, & je fus coucher à Mirmenaganne avec trois Sauvages, à quatre lieuës du Fort de Monsieur Richard de Fronsac.

J'appris avec joie, quinze jours aprés mon départ, par l'un de nos Porte-Croix, que ce cher Missionnaire aïant assemblé autant de Sauva- [194] ges qu'il avoit pû, les avoit obligez de faire amende honorable à la Croix ; afin de luy faire rendre par ces Peuples, une partie de l'honneur que la négligence de leurs ancêtres luy avoient ravi.

La ceremonie commença le soir, au Soleil couchant, en cette maniere. Le Pere fit élever une Croix semblable à celle que les Anciens de la Nation Gaspesienne avoient coûtume de mettre au milieu de la place destinée pour tenir leur Conseil : il se prosterna respectueusement avec tous les Sauvages,

devant ce sacré signe de nôtre salut ; & entonna en langue Sauvage, à la fin des Prieres ordinaires, le *Vexilla regis*, que nos Porte-Croix chantoient à l'alterna- [195] tive, les hommes & les femmes, avec une pieté singuliere. Tout le monde se retira dans la Cabanne du Chef, après ces éxercices de devotion, où l'on ne fit que parler des merveilles de la Croix : je peux même dire avec verité, que comme le Peuple d'Israël, qui avoit vêcu long-tems dans la negligence & le mépris des Commandemens de la Loi, ne put contenir ses larmes, lorsque le Grand-Prêtre Helchias leur fit le recit fidele des bienfaits qu'ils avoient reçûs de Dieu, & le juste reproche de l'ingratitude où ils avoient vêcu si long-tems, sans en reconnoître les excellences & les grandeurs ; ainsi tous nos Porte-Croix fondoient en larmes, lorsque le Pere Missionnaire leur ex- [196] pliqua les avantages & les benedictions qu'ils avoient reçûs de la Croix ; l'estime & la veneration avec laquelle elle avoit été honorée par leurs ancêtres ; & le peu de soin qu'on avoit eu jusqu'alors, de luy rendre le culte qui luy étoit legitimement dû. Ils protesterent tous publiquement, avant que de se coucher, qu'ils en étoient sensiblement touchez de douleur ; & que le même Soleil qui avoit été le témoin de leur ingratitude, le seroit aussi des respects & des adorations qu'ils rendroient publiquement à la Croix. La nuit se passa avec ces sentimens de devotion : & le lendemain à la pointe du jour, le Pere fit dresser son Autel dans une Cabanne particuliere, que les Sauvages [197] avoient accommodée fort proprement avec des branches de sapin, où il celebra la sainte Messe ; aprés laquelle, tout revêtu qu'il étoit des habits Sacerdotaux, il distribua des Croix à tout ce qu'il y avoit de Gaspesiens, jusques aux enfans même. Ces Sauvages, par une sainte émulation, qui marquoit visiblement l'approbation qu'ils donnoient au zele de leur Missionnaire, firent tous autant qu'ils étoient, plusieurs belles Croix, lesquelles ils enjoliverent avec la rassade, la pourcelaine, & leur peinture ordinaire ; & ils les attacherent aux deux bouts de leurs canots, dans lesquels ils s'embarquerent, en chantant devotement le *Vexilla regis*.

Je laisse au Lecteur à juger de la beauté de cette flotte [198] Gaspesienne, qui par une agreable varieté d'étendarts ornez de ces Croix de differentes couleurs, faisoient voir, par l'agitation de l'eau & la reverberation du Soleil, un spectacle des plus ravissans, qui donna beaucoup de consolation aux François, quand ils virent arriver ces Sauvages auec leur Missionnaire, portant tous à la main ce sacré signe du salut.

Ce fut l'année 1677. & la seconde aprés mon arrivée en Canada, que je commençai pour la premiere fois la Mission des Porte-Croix, avec les circonstances que vous allez voir dans la Relation du penible voïage que je fis par les bois brûlez ; afin de leur prêcher l'Evangile, suivant la promesse que j'en avois faite [199] aux Deputez que le Chef de cette Nation m'avoit envoïez, de la riviere de Sainte-Croix à Nipisiquit, pour me prier de les aller catechiser.

## CHAPITRE XI.

*Relation du penible Voïage de l'Auteur, allant annoncer la Foi aux Gaspesiens Porte-Croix.*

IL est bien vrai qu'il n'y a que Dieu seul qui puisse adoucir, par l'onction de sa grace, les travaux Apostoliques des Missions laborieuses de la Nouvelle France : aussi faut-il avoüer ingenûment, que toutes les forces de la Nature ne serviroient qu'à augmenter les peines des Missionnaires, si la Croix d'un [200] Dieu crucifié ne leur communiquoit une partie de cette force victorieuse, avec laquelle il a glorieusement triomphé de tout ce qu'il y avoit de plus rude & de plus douloureux dans les opprobres du Calvaire. C'étoit aussi sans doute dans cette pensée que l'Apôtre saint Paul disoit, qu'il pouvoit toutes choses avec la grace de celuy qui luy donnoit la force de tout entreprendre, & de tout faire pour sa gloire & le salut des ames.

Je n'ai jamais fait une experience plus sensible de cette verité, que dans le voïage que j'entrepris pour aller administrer les Sacremens aux François, qui demeuroient avec Monsieur Richard Denys dê Fronsac à Mizamichis, & prêcher l'Evangile aux Sau- [201] vages Porte-Croix, qui n'avoient presque point du tout entendu parler des Misteres de nôtre sainte Religion. La charité que je devois avoir pour tous les Sauvages de ma Mission, me sollicitoit puissamment de l'entreprendre, quoique ce fût dans la saison de l'Hiver la plus difficile & la plus rigoureuse : & il semble que Dieu en approuva le dessein, puisqu'un Sauvage, lorsque nous y pensions le moins, arriva avec sa femme à Nipisiquit, qui m'assûra que pour éviter quelques differents qui étoient survenus entre les Gaspesiens de Ristigouche, il en étoit sorti avec sa femme & son enfant, pour se retirer à Mizamichis ; afin d'y vivre en repos, avec ceux de sa connoissance. Comme c'étoit là [202] pour moi une occasion assez favorable, & une compagnie qui me pouvoit être d'un tres-grand secours pendant cette route, je le priai de differer son départ jusqu'à quelques jours, pour me donner le tems & la consolation de baptiser quelques Sauvages que j'avois instruits, pour recevoir le premier & le plus necessaire de nos Sacremens. Nôtre Sauvage m'attendit avec plaisir : Monsieur Hainaut de Barbaucannes voulut bien être de la partie, & s'offrit, de la maniere la plus obligeante, à me tenir compagnie. On fit pour cet effet nos provisions, qui consistoient en vingt-quatre petits pains, cinq à six livres de farine, trois livres de beurre, & un petit baril d'écorce, qui contenoit [203] deux à trois pots d'eau-de-vie : d'ailleurs, je métois précautionné d'une boëte de confection d'hyacinte, que les Religieuses Hospitalieres m'avoient donnée devant mon départ de Quebec pour Nipisiquit.

Nipisiquit est un sejour des plus charmans qu'il y ait dans la grande Baye de Saint Laurent : il n'est éloigné que de douze à quinze lieuës de l'Isle Percée. La terre y est fertile, & abondante en toutes choses : l'air y est pur & sain. Trois belles rivieres qui s'y déchargent, forment un bassin tres-agreable, dont les eaux se perdent dans la mer, par un détroit qui en fait l'entrée & l'ouverture. Les Recollets de la Province d'Aquitaine y ont commencé la Mis- [204] sion en 1620. & le Pere Bernardin, un de ces illustres Missionnaires, mourut de faim

& de fatigues, en traversant les bois pour aller de Miscou & de Nipisiquit à la riviere de Saint Jean, à la Cadie, où ces Reverends Peres avoient leur établissement principal. Les R R. P P. Capucins, & singulierement les R R. P P. Jesuites, y ont éxercé leur zele & leur charité pour la conversion des Infideles : ils y ont fait bâtir une Chapelle dediée à la Sainte Vierge ; & l'on remarque que celuy de ces Peres qui quitta cette Mission, laissa son bonnet dessus l'Autel, disant qu'il le reviendroit chercher quand il luy plairoit ; pour faire connoître que sa Compagnie avoit droit d'établisse- [205] ment dans ce lieu. Le Sieur Henaut de Barbaucannes y cultive la terre avec succez, & recüeille du froment au-delà de ce qu'il en faut pour l'entretien de sa famille. Monsieur Richard Denys de Fronsac en est le Seigneur proprietaire.

Il est bon de sçavoir qu'il faut porter le necessaire à la vie, quand on s'éloigne en Canada, des Habitations Françoises, & lorsqu'on entreprend quelque voïage considerable ; n'y aïant ni Cabarets, ni Auberges, & ne trouvant pas de maison dans ces vastes forêts, pour s'y retirer la nuit, on se trouve obligé de coucher à la Belle-étoile. Persuadez que nous étions de cette verité, par l'experience que nous en avions déja [206] faite autrefois ; un chacun prit sa couverture, & se chargea de son paquet, dans lequel étoit une partie des vivres dont nous avions besoin, pour la route que nous avions à faire.

Tous nos Gaspesiens assisterent devotement aux Prieres, que nous fîmes de bon matin, pour implorer le secours des Anges Tutelaires de ces Païs, & demander à Dieu la conversion des Sauvages Porte-Croix, ausquels j'allois, pour la premiere fois, annoncer les veritez de nôtre sainte Religion. Ils firent tout ce qu'ils pûrent pour m'obliger de passer avec eux le reste de l'Hiver, & de differer mon départ jusqu'à une saison plus commode & moins rigoureuse : mais enfin, il étoit juste de [207] contenter les François & les Sauvages de Mizamichis. La parole de Dieu est le pain spirituel des ames ; il faloit, aprés quatre mois de sejour à Nipisiquit, le distribüer à ceux qui m'attendoient depuis si long-tems pour le recevoir. Je fis donc concevoir à nos Sauvages, que s'ils avoient autant de desir du salut de leurs freres, qu'ils m'avoient témoigné, ils devoient se réjoüir de la peine que j'allois prendre, pour leur donner les mêmes instructions qu'ils avoient eux-mêmes reçûës de mes Catechismes ; puisque je n'avois pas d'autre dessein, que de les conduire & de les voir tous ensemble dans le Ciel. Ces pauvres gens approuverent mes raisons & mon zele, par les applaudissemens ordi- [208] naires à cette Nation, & consentirent enfin à mon départ, sous la promesse que je leur fis de retourner chez eux au commencement du Printems.

La femme de nôtre Sauvage se chargea de son petit enfant, que je baptisai & nommai Pierre, avant mon départ de Nipisiquit, par un effet singulier de la Providence & de la misericorde de Dieu, comme il sera bien aisé de remarquer à la fin de la Relation de ce penible Voïage. Nous prîmes chacun nos paquets sur nos épaules, & nous nous mîmes en chemin, avec les raquettes aux pieds. Le soir nous obligea, aprés quatre à cinq lieuës de marche, de faire une Cabanne, afin d'y passer la nuit. Il falut, [209] pour la rendre autant commode que le païs le pouvoit permettre, faire un trou dans la neige, haute de quatre à cinq pieds, laquelle nous fûmes obligez de jetter avec nos raquettes, jusques à ce que nous eussions trouvé la terre, que nôtre Sauvagesse couvrit de branches de sapin toutes verdoïantes, sur lesquelles nous nous couchâmes durant la nuit. Monsieur Henaut se donna la peine, avec nôtre Sauvage, de couper & d'amasser le

bois necessaire pour nous chaufer ; & un chacun prit sa refection avec autant de contentement, que si nous eussions été dans une bonne Auberge. La perte seule que nous avions faite de nôtre eau-de-vie, nous donna un peu de chagrin ; car quelque précau- [210] tion que l'on eût prise de bien gommer le petit baril d'ecorce, il s'y trouva encore quelque petite ouverture, par laquelle l'eau-de-vie s'étoit écoulée en chemin faisant, sans que pas un de nous en eût connoissance, que lorsque l'on en voulut prendre un coup aprés le repas. Il n'en restoit plus que tres-peu : elle fut aussi distribuée sur le champ, pour nous consoler de cette disgrace, & mettre le reste hors de danger de se perdre. Il est vrai cependant, que nous fûmes privez d'un grand soulagement, par la perte de cette eau-de-vie ; puisque nous nous trouvâmes quelque-tems aprés dans des conjonctures si pressantes, que cette liqueur nous eût été sans doute d'un tres-grand secours ; mais enfin [211] il falut bien nous consoler de cette fâcheuse avanture : & nous passâmes la premiere nuit, comme toutes les autres de nôtre Voïage, à l'enseigne de la Lune & de la Belle-étoile.

Le lendemain matin, aprés avoir celebré la sainte Messe dans une cabanne que nos gens firent exprés, avec des perches couvertes de branches de sapin, & aprés que nous eûmes déjeûné & accommodé nos paquets, nous continuâmes nôtre voïage, en montant toûjours, & côtoïant la riviere de Nipisiquit, jusqu'au rapide appellé vulgairement le Saut aux loups marins, qui fait la separation des deux chemins qui conduisent à Mizamichis ; l'un plus court, mais plus difficile, par les bois brûlez ; & l'autre plus [212] long, mais plus aisé, par la riviere. Le desir extréme que j'avois de me rendre incessament chez nos Porte-Croix, pour y commencer la Mission, me fit resoudre d'autant plus facilement à prendre la route des bois brûlez, que le Sieur Henaut & le Sauvage même en avoient fait la traverse, peu de tems auparavant : & ainsi nous quittâmes, d'un commun accord, la riviere, qui cependant nous eût épargné beaucoup de peine & de fatigue en la suivant, selon que l'experience nous l'a fait assez connoître depuis.

Pour sçavoir ce que c'est que les bois brûlez, je vous dirai que le Ciel étant un jour tout en feu, plein d'orage & de tonnerres, qui grondoient & se faisoient entendre [213] de toutes parts ; la foudre tomba, dans un tems où la secheresse étoit extraordinaire, & embrasa non-seulement tout ce qu'il y avoit de bois & de forêts entre Mizamichis & Nipisiquit ; mais encore brûla & consuma plus de deux cens cinquante lieuës de païs : en sorte qu'on n'y voit plus que des troncs d'arbres fort hauts & tous noircis, qui portent dans leur affreuse sterilité, des marques d'une incendie generale & tout-à-fait surprenante. Cette vaste étenduë de païs est toûjours couverte de neige pendant l'Hiver. On n'y voit que des rejettons & de petits arbrisseaux, qui paroissent plûtôt des isles distantes les unes des autres de deux à trois lieuës, que des bois, ni des forêts de Canada : en un [214] mot, cet incendie fut si furieux & si violent, que les flâmes s'élançoient, & s'embrassoient même, pour ainsi dire, d'un bord de la riviere à l'autre ; d'où vient que les orignaux & les castors n'y ont paru que long-tems aprés ce funeste accident. Tout ce qui donne plus de peine aux Voïageurs qui traversent ces bois brûlez, c'est qu'ils ne trouvent ni lieu pour se cabanner à l'abri du vent, ni de bois propre pour se chaufer. Ce fut cependant dans ces tristes solitudes, & dans ces deserts plus affreux mille fois que ceux de l'Arabie Pierreuse, que nous nous égarâmes, à cause que nous voulûmes suivre les pistes de quelques Sauvages qui étoient à la chasse au castor : car vou- [215] lant éxaminer les tours & détours des Sauvages & de ces animaux, nous prîmes une fausse route,

& nous nous éloignâmes de celle qui étoit sans doute la plus juste & la plus assûrée. Nous marchâmes trois jours continuels au milieu de ce desert, avec des peines incroïables ; en sorte que nous fûmes obligez d'y sejourner, pour nous reposer de tant de fatigues si longues & si penibles.

Le lendemain nous continuâmes nôtre route avec de nouvelles difficultez, causées par une grande abondance de neige qui étoit tombée la nuit precedente, & qui pensa nous desoler entierement ; étant obligez de marcher, depuis le matin jusqu'au soir, en ces neiges, dans lesquelles nous [216] enfoncions jusques au genoüil, à chaque pas que nous faisions. Cette marche extraordinairement penible & fatiguante, jointe à la disette des vivres, n'aïant plus qu'un petit morceau de pain chaque jour à manger, nous reduisit dans une misere extréme : nôtre Sauvage tomboit sur les dents ; sa femme, avec son petit enfant, me faisoient compassion : & je vous avouë ingenûment, pour mon particulier, que je n'en pouvois plus du tout.

La necessité cependant où nous étions de toutes choses, nous obligeoit de continuer nôtre chemin ; & il faloit necessairement ou mourir, ou marcher. Monsieur Henaut, Sieur de Barbaucannes, étoit le seul qui avoit le plus de [217] courage ; il nous traçoit le chemin : nôtre Sauvage le suivoit, sa femme marchoit aprés, & je restois le dernier de la troupe, comme étant le plus harassé du chemin, que je trouvois neanmoins plus aisé & moins fatiguant que les autres, à cause qu'il étoit batu & fraïé par ceux qui me précedoient ; ce qui me fut sans doute d'un grand secours, & me donna beaucoup de soulagement.

Cependant, quelque penible que fut cette marche, je vous avouë qu'elle perdoit à mon égard une partie de ce qu'elle pouvoit avoir de rude & de fâcheux, par l'esperance & la pensée que j'avois, que nous approchions de la riviere de Sainte-Croix : mais enfin elle me parut affreuse, au-delà de [218] ce qu'on peut s'imaginer, lorsque le Sieur Henaut & le Sauvage me dirent qu'il y avoit déja trois jours que nous étions égarez ; qu'ils ne connoissoient plus de route, ni de chemin ; & qu'enfin il faloit nous abandonner entierement à la Providence, & aller où il plairoit à Dieu de nous conduire.

Cette nouvelle me fut d'autant plus affligeante, qu'il n'y avoit plus d'apparence de retourner à Nipisiguit, à cause que la neige, qui étoit tombée en grande quantité depuis nôtre départ, avoit comblé & couvert toutes nos pistes. Il neigeoit encore actuellement ; & il nous falut cependant faire de necessité vertu, & marcher jusqu'à la nuit, pour trouver un lieu propre [219] pour nous cabanner.

Je ne sçaurois vous exprimer ici, quelles furent alors nos inquietudes, nous trouvant au milieu de ces deserts, affreux, dépourvûs de toutes les choses les plus necessaires à la vie, accablez de foiblesse & de fatigue, dans la saison la plus difficile & la plus rigoureuse de l'Hiver, sans vivres ; & ce qui est de plus affligeant, sans guide & sans chemin. Pour comble de malheur, il *y* avoit trois jours que nous ne mangions qu'un petit morceau de pain sur le soir, qui pour lors nous manqua tout-à-fait : en sorte qu'aïant été obligez d'avoir recours à la farine que nôtre Sauvage avoit dans son paquet, nous fûmes reduits d'en jetter soir & matin deux à [220] trois poignées dans une chaudronnée d'eau de neige, que nous faisions boüillir ; ce qui servoit plûtôt à la blanchir, qu'à nous nourrir. Pour toute consolation, le Sieur Henaut me dit, qu'il avoit deux paires de souliers Sauvages, avec un morceau de peau passée ; & qu'en tout cas nous les ferions griller, ou boüillir, pour les manger ensemble. Jugez de là, si nous n'étions pas veritablement dignes de compassion.

La nuit se passa avec de nouvelles difficultez. Un vent de Nord-oüest, d'un froid extraordinairement sensible & piquant, nous pensa glacer ; parce que nous n'avions pû trouver du bois ce qu'il nous en faloit pour nous chaufer pendant la nuit : en sorte que [221] pour ne point mourir de froid dans nôtre cabanne, nous en partîmes avant le jour, avec des peines que l'on ne peut s'imaginer. Je pensai être abîmé dans un fossé profond que étoit couvert de neige, d'où l'on eut beaucoup de peine & de difficulté à me retirer : je peux même dire que c'étoit fait de moi, si par un bonheur singulier je n'eusse rencontré un gros arbre qui étoit au-travers de cette fosse, sur lequel je demeurai en attendant le secours qu'on me donna pour sortir de cet horrible danger, où je me vis pour lors exposé à deux doigts de la mort.

A peine étois-je éloigné d'une portée de fuzil de ce precipice, que voulant passer une petite riviere, l'une de mes [222] raquettes se cassa, & je tombai dans l'eau jusqu'à la ceinture ; ce qui obligea Monsieur Henaut & le Sauvage, de chercher promtement un lieu propre pour nous cabanner, faire du feu pour me réchaufer, parce que le froid commençoit à me saisir par tout le corps : ce fut dans cette cabanne, où le peu de farine que nous avions toûjours ménagé fort éxactement, nous manqua aussi-bien que le pain ; la faim nous en chassa de bon matin, pour chercher ce que la Providence voudroit nous donner.

Je conçûs dés-lors parfaitement bien le danger évident où nous étions de mourir de faim, de foiblesse, & de miseres dans ces bois, si le Seigneur ne nous donnoit bien-tôt les moïens d'en sor- [223] tir : comme je sentois que les forces commençoient à me manquer, & que je n'en pouvois presque plus, je renouvellai les premieres intentions avec lesquelles j'avois entrepris ce penible voïage ; & j'offris derechef de bon cœur à Nôtre-Seigneur, les peines & les fatigues que j'endurois pour sa gloire, & pour la satisfaction de mes pechez.

La seule pensée d'un Jesus-Christ mourant sur la Croix, abandonné de tout le monde, nous donnant un éxemple admirable du sacrifice que nous devons faire de nôtre vie pour le salut des ames, jointe à la reflexion que je fis sur la mort de saint François Xavier, expirant dans sa petite cabanne, destitué de tous les secours humains, me combla [224] de joie & de consolation au milieu de mes peines : & il est vrai que je fus pour lors persuadé, mieux que jamais, que Dieu a un tresor de graces & de benedictons, qu'il reserve uniquement pour les Missionnaires, qui se confient & s'abandonnent entierement aux soins amoureux de sa Providence, parmi les dangers & les perils les plus affreux de leurs Missions, & de leurs travaux Apostoliques.

Nous avions marché tout le long du jour, & tres-peu avancé, tant à cause de la foiblesse extréme où j'étois reduit, qu'à cause de la difficulté du chemin ; lorsqu'étant entierement occupé de ces aimables & saintes reflexions, Monsieur Henaut & le Sauvage, qui nous devançoient, firent un [225] cri de joie & d'allegresse, pour la rencontre heureuse qu'ils avoient faite, de la piste toute nouvelle d'un Sauvage qui avoit passé le matin pour aller à la chasse. Ils vinrent tous les deux au-devant de moi, pour m'assûrer que toutes nos peines alloient bien-tôt finir, par l'heureuse arrivée au Fort de la riviere de Sainte-Croix, où ils esperoient que nous arriverions bien-tôt. Je ne fus pas insensible, non plus que les autres, à la joie que me causa cette agreable rencontre : mais enfin, comme il n'y a point de plaisir si épuré dans le monde, qu'il ne s'y trouve toûjours quelque mêlange de chagrin & d'inquiétude, la satisfaction que nous venions de recevoir fut alterée, par l'incer- [226] titudee, si nous devions suivre ou re-

brousser sur les traces nouvellement découvertes ; d'autant que nous avions sujet de douter si ce Sauvage alloit à la chasse seulement, ou s'il ne commençoit pas l'un de ces voïages considerables & d'une longue étenduë de païs, qu'ils traversent assez souvent pendant l'Hiver, pour rendre visite à leurs amis. Incertains de la route que nous devions tenir, nous resolûmes, à tout hazard, de traverser ces pistes, & de marcher à nôtre ordinaire ; dans l'esperance que Dieu nous serviroit de guide, & nous feroit misericorde. Il éxauça nos vœux & nos prieres : & le Seigneur se contentant de nos fatigues & de nos peines, voulut bien [227] nous consoler d'une maniere qui nous fit admirer la conduite admirable de sa divine Providence.

C'est une coûtume generalement observée parmi nos Gaspesiens, de ne retourner jamais le soir, ou du moins tres-rarement, par le même chemin à la cabanne, quand ils en sortent le matin pour aller à la chasse : ils prennent des routes differentes, afin de batre la campagne, & de découvrir plus de païs de ravages d'orignaux & de castors. Dieu permit cependant que le Sauvage dont nous avions apperçû les vestiges revint sur ses pas, jusqu'à l'endroit même où nous avions traversé son chemin. Il en fut surpris d'abord ; mais conjecturant de nôtre maniere de [228] marcher, que ceux qui venoient de passer étoient extrémement fatiguez, il prit la resolution de nous suivre, & vint aprés nous, pour nous soulager autant qu'il en étoit capable.

Un certain bruit sourd, causé par l'agitation de ses raquettes & le mouvement des branches au-travers desquelles il étoit obligé de marcher, m'obligea de tourner la tête, pour reconnoître de quel endroit il pouvoit provenir. Vous pouvez juger de la joie que j'eus, en voïant ce Gaspesien charitable qui venoit à moi, pour nous enseigner nôtre chemin, par celle que vous recevriez vous-même en semblable rencontre : la mienne fut si sensible, que je redoublai le pas, tout [229] fatigué que j'étois pour en avertir ceux qui me precedoient.

Comme la nuit s'approchoit, & que d'ailleurs nous étions sans force & sans vigueur, il nous obligea de cabanner, & voulut luy seul prendre la peine de couper le bois necessaire pour nous chaufer, & mettre la cabanne en état de nous y reposer. Il me fit present d'une perdrix qu'il avoit tué à la chasse ; la Providence luy en donna deux autres aussi-tôt, pour récompenser la charité qu'il nous faisoit : elles étoient juchées sur les branches d'un sapin, comme le sont ordinairement les perdrix de Canada ; il les tua toutes deux d'un coup de fuzil, & on les mit toutes trois dans la chaudiere, [230] pour souper à cinq personnes, autant fatiguez du voïage & de la faim, que nous étions pour lors.

Quoique les Sauvages soient charitables au-delà de ce qu'on s'imagine en Europe, ils se font cependant assez souvent prier, quand on a besoin de leur secours, mais singulierement quand ils se persuadent qu'on ne peut se passer de leur service. Le nôtre étoit de ce caractere : connoissant parfaitement bien de quelle utilité il nous étoit dans la conjoncture fâcheuse où nous nous trouvions, il s'offroit de tems en tems à nous servir de guide ; mais à condition, disoit-il, que nous luy donnerions deux douzaines de couvertures, une barique de farine, & trois de bled d'Inde ; [231] une douzaine de capots, dix fuzils, avec de la poudre & du plomb & une infinité d'autres choses qu'il vouloit avoir pour nous remettre dans le bon chemin, & nous conduire dans sa cabanne. C'étoit beaucoup, je l'avouë ; mais enfin, c'étoit trop peu demander à des gens qui auroient volontiers donné toute chose au monde, pour se retirer d'un aussi méchant pas que celuy où nous nous trouvions malheureusement engagez, &

duquel nous eussions eu beaucoup de peine à sortir, sans le secours de ce Sauvage.

La nuit se passa un peu plus tranquillement que les precedentes : il falut cependant partir le lendemain matin, sans prendre aucune nourriture ; & comme nôtre pe- [232] tite troupe attendoit que j'eusse achevé mon Office, le Sauvage qui me servoit de guide étant impatient de ce que je demeurois si long-tems à genoux dans un endroit separé du bruit de la cabanne, s'approcha de moi ; & croïant que j'avois eu quelque revelation, ou reçû le don de prophetie, me pria fort serieusement de luy prédire ce qui nous devoit arriver durant la journée : Tu parles à Dieu, me dit-il ; tu enseignes le chemin du Soleil, tu es Patriarche, tu as de l'esprit ; & il faut croire que celuy qui a tout fait, aura exaucé ta priere : Dis-moi donc, si nous tuërons aujourd'hui beaucoup d'orignaux & de castors, pour te regaler, aprés tant de fatigues & de miseres que tu [233] as souffertes jusques à present.

Je fus assez surpris de ce discours : & luy aïant répondu que le Seigneur ne m'avoit pas fait cette grace, dont je me reputois tout-à-fait indigne, je luy fis connoître que Dieu étant le Pere commun de tous les hommes, qui ne refuse pas même la nourriture aux corbeaux, ni aux plus petits animaux de la terre ; il faloit aussi esperer que sa Providence nous donneroit dequoi nous substanter, puisqu'il n'abandonnoit jamais ses serviteurs dans leurs besoins ; & que s'il les faisoit souffrir pour un tems dans ce monde, c'étoit pour les récompenser éternellement dans le Ciel.

Ejougouloumoüet, c'étoit le nom de ce Sauvage, qui [234] n'étoit pas encore baptisé, quoiqu'il fût âgé de cinquante à soixante ans, ne pouvoit comprendre ces veritez Chrêtiennes. Preoccupé uniquement de la pensée qu'il avoit, que Dieu parloit familierement aux Patriarches, me témoigna son chagrin, particulierement aprés que je luy eûs dit que je ne connoissois aucun endroit où nous pourrions trouver des castors, des ours, ou des orignaux ; & qu'enfin il falloit s'en remettre entierement aux soins de la divine Providence. Je suis donc, repartit Ejougouloumoüet, quelque chose de plus que les Patriarches ; puisque Dieu m'a parlé durant mon sommeil, & qu'il m'a revelé qu'infailliblement, avant qu'il soit midi, nous tuërons des orignaux & [235] des castors en abondance, pour nous regaler : Allons, marchons à la bonne heure, & tu verras que les Sauvages ont plus d'esprit que toi. Il falut le suivre, plûtôt dans l'esperance de trouver dequoi manger dans sa cabanne, où nous allions, que dans la route qu'il nous obligeoit de faire pour trouver ses orignaux & ses castors, qu'une imagination famelique luy persuadoit de rencontrer à tout moment. Cependant, ses esperances furent vaines & inutiles : il fut même obligé d'avoüer qu'il avoit été trop credule ; & que doresnavant, jamais il ne croiroit plus aux rêves, ni aux songes, ausquels tous les Sauvages sont attachez jusqu'à la superstition.

Pour confondre son extra- [236] vagante credulité, & le convaincre du soin que Dieu prend de ses serviteurs, la Providence permit que lorsque nous y pensions le moins, nous trouvâmes deux gros porcs-épis, sur les quatre heures du soir. Ces animaux, qui ressemblent assez bien aux herissons que l'on voit en France, étoient cabannez dans le creux d'un arbre dont ils avoient mangé l'écorce, qui leur servoit de nourriture. Ils ont pour l'ordinaire, chacun leur cabanne particuliere ; & nôtre Ejougouloumoüet fut surpris aussi-bien que nous, de les voir cabannez tous les deux ensemble. On en prit un d'abord, qu'on chargea dessus mes épaules, pour porter à la Sauvagesse, qui avoit déja

allumé le feu, afin de [237] le faire cuire dans la chaudiere. Nous en fîmes un fort bon repas : le boüillon nous sembla aussi succulant qu'un bon consommé ; & nous experimentâmes de bonne-foi, que le proverbe est bien veritable, & qu'il n'y a point de meilleure sauce que le bon appetit. Nous portâmes l'autre porc-épi à la cabanne de nôtre Sauvage, où nous trouvâmes huit personnes, qui faisoient assez voir dans leurs visages extenuez & tout décharnez, le peu de nourriture qu'ils avoient pris, & la faim que ces pauvres malheureux souffroient depuis un mois, qu'ils étoient cabannez sur le bord d'une riviere, où ils pêchoient des truites en tres-petite quantité : ils n'en avoient plus que cinq pour [328] toutes provisions, lorsque nous arrivâmes chez eux ; on les mit dans la chaudiere avec nôtre porc-épi, que nous mangeâmes ensemble.

Je fus assez surpris de voir dans la place d'honneur, & dans l'endroit le plus considerable de la cabanne, une belle Croix, enjolivée avec de la rassade, entre deux femmes que nôtre Ejougouloumoüet entretenoit ; l'une comme sa femme legitime ; & l'autre comme sa concubine, qui étoit, disois-il, venuë miraculeusement du Ciel à son secours, dans le tems qu'il étoit abandonné de tous les Sauvages, & cruellement affligé de maladie au milieu des bois, luy, sa femme & ses enfans, sans aucune esperance de secours humain.

[239] Je pris respectueusement cette Croix entre mes mains, en presence de toute la compagnie ; & trouvant dans un si beau sujet de pieté, l'occasion favorable de catechiser ces Sauvages, je fis connoître à nôtre Ejougouloumoüet, qu'elle étoit le caractere du Chrêtien, & le sacré signe de nôtre salut ; qu'elle condamnoit par sa pureté, la bigamie criminelle dans laquelle il avoit vêcu jusqu'alors ; & qu'enfin il faloit de deux choses l'une, ou quitter sa concubine, ou renoncer tout de bon à sa Croix.

S'il est ainsi, répondit cet Infidele, j'aimerois mille fois mieux abandonner, non-seulement la femme qui vient du Ciel, mais encore ma femme legitime, & mes enfans mêmes, [240] plûtôt que de quitter la Croix que j'ai reçûë de mes ancêtres en titre d'heritage & par droit d'ainesse ; & je la veux conserver toûjours precieusement, comme la marque d'honneur qui distingue les Sauvages de Mizamichis, de toutes les autres Nations de la Nouvelle France. Il me promit donc qu'il quitteroit cette concubine ; attendu même que cette femme, peut-être interieurement touchée des instructions que je venois de faire à ceux de la cabanne, prit resolution de retourner chez ses parens, & de se faire instruire pour recevoir le saint Baptême. C'étoit aussi, sans doute, tout ce que je pouvois esperer pour lors de ces pauvres Barbares.

Nous les quittâmes dans [241] cette bonne resolution ; & prenant de nouvelles forces de nôtre foiblesse, par l'esperance que nous avions d'arriver ce soir-là chez Monsieur de Fronsac, nous continuâmes nôtre route. A peine avions nous fait une demi lieuë, que je fus obligé de me jetter sur la neige, par une debilité de cœur & un ébloüissement qui me prit, & dont je ne pûs revenir, que par le secours d'une prise de confection d'hyacinte, que l'on démêla avec un peu d'eau de neige, pour me la faire avaler plus facilement : remede dont je fus obligé de me servir le reste du voïage, & qui me donna la force de suivre, quoiqu'avec de grandes difficultez, nôtre petite troupe qui me traçoit le chemin.

[242] Le Sieur Henaut, dont je ne pouvois assez admirer la force & la vigueur, m'encourageoit du mieux qu'il luy étoit possible ; m'assûrant, à chaque pointe de terre ou de rochers que nous rencontrions, qu'il appercevoit l'Habitation & le Fort de Monsieur de Fronsac, & qu'il ne restoit plus qu'un peu de chemin

à faire, pour nous délivrer entierement de nos peines, & nous consoler de nos fatigues : mais enfin, si la croïance que je donnois à ses paroles, m'obligeoient quelquefois de rédoubler le pas, dans l'esperance dont je me flatois d'arriver bien-tôt ; ma lassitude s'augmentoit aussi d'autant plus, qu'aïant doublé plusieurs pointes, je ne voïois point l'Habitation, ni [243] le Fort de Fronsac ; en sorte que je ne voulus plus ajoûter foi à tout ce qu'il me dit dans la suite, lors même qu'il me montra la veritable pointe que nous cherchions depuis la matin. La faim que je souffrois m'empêchoit d'écouter toutes ces raisons ; & la lassitude où j'étois reduit ne me laissoit plus de force, qu'autant qu'il m'en falut pour me traîner à l'abri du vent, dans un endroit assez agreable, où je me couchai sur la neige ; conjurant de tout mon cœur le Sieur Henaut de me laisser tout seul, & d'aller avec sa compagnie chez monsieur de Fronsac : Car enfin, luy disois-je, ou nous en sommes proche, ou éloignez : si nous avons aussi peu de che- [244] min à faire, comme vous le dites, allez à la bonne heure, & rendez-vous incessamment au Fort ; vous m'envoirez quelques-uns de nos François, pour m'apporter des vivres, & pour me conduire chez Monsieur Denys de Fronsac : mais si nous en sommes encore aussi éloignez, comme je me le persuade, je vous déclare que je ne puis marcher davantage. Tout ce que je pûs luy dire, ne fut cependant pas capable de le persuader d'aller chercher le repos dont luy-même avoit tres-grand besoin ; jamais il ne voulut m'abandonner d'un seul moment : il m'encouragea du mieux qu'il luy fut possible, & ordonna aux Sauvages de couper du bois pour nous chaufer ; ai- [245] mant mieux, me disoit-il, rester dans la cabanne où nous étions, que d'arriver un quart-d'heure avant moi au logis. Ce peu de repos me donna des forces nouvelles ; & déferant entierement, par un principe de reconnoissance, à l'amitié & à la generosité de ce fidele ami, je pris la resolution de continuer nôtre chemin : en sorte qu'aprés avoir marché l'espace d'une petite demi-lieuë, nous arrivâmes, par un tems de neige qui tomboit en abondance, au Fort & à l'Habitation de Monsieur de Fronsac, lequel fit tout ce qu'il put pour nous remettre & nous consoler de nos fatigues. Nous y fûmes bientôt visitez par nos Sauvages Porte-Croix, qui demeurent ordinairement à Mizamichi- [246] che, qui est une belle riviere, abondante en toute sorte de chasse & de poisson : elle est éloignée de quarante lieuës de l'Isle Percée ; les terres y sont assez fertiles. Nous l'avons appellée depuis, la Riviere de Sainte-Croix, en memoire & à l'honneur de ce sacré signe de nôtre redemption, qui est en veneration singuliere parmi ces Peuples infideles. L'accident funeste qui nous mit dans la derniere de toutes les consternations, trois ou quatre jours aprés nôtre arrivée, nous fit assez connoître que nous étions dans un païs où la Croix, qui avoit autrefois comblé de benediction les Sauvages, selon la tradition de leurs ancêtres, nous fit goûter une bonne partie de son amertume.

[247] Nôtre Sauvagesse, femme de Koucdedaoüi, avec lequel nous etions partis de Nipisiquit, s'étoit cabannée à l'absence de son mari, tout proche le Fort de Monsieur de Fronsac, avec une Sauvagesse de sa connoissance, qui avoit un enfant à la mammelle. Au défaut d'écorce de bouleau, elles couvrirent leur cabanne avec des branches de sapin, & trouverent à propos d'y mettre de la paille, pour s'y reposer durant la nuit. Le froid étoit extréme : un vent de Nord-oüest qui soufloit de toute sa force, en augmentoit la rigueur ; en sorte que ces femmes se virent obligées de faire plus grand feu qu'à l'ordinaire, & s'endormirent paisiblement, sans aucun présentiment du malheur qui leur [248]

devoit arriver : mais, à peine ces deux Sauvagesses infortunées eurent-elles fermé les yeux, que le feu prit à la paille ; & poussant son activité jusques aux branches de sapin, il consomma & reduisit en cendres toute la cabanne. On laisse à penser, quelle fut l'extrémité où furent reduites ces pauvres femmes, lorsqu'elles se virent toutes investies & environnées de flâmes : elles firent d'abord des cris si perçans, qu'ils parvinrent à nos oreilles, presque aussi-tôt qu'ils furent sortis de leur bouche. On peut même dire qu'elles ne seroient jamais sorties de ce terrible embrasement, si l'une de ces deux Sauvagesses, aïant toûjours une presence d'esprit admirable dans un danger si pressant, [249] n'eût fait une ouverture à la cabanne, par laquelle elle se jetta toute nuë avec son enfant, au milieu de la neige. Sa compagne ne fut pas si prudente, ni si heureuse : elle perdit presque aussi-tôt le jugement, que l'esperance de se sauver ; & ne se mettant plus en peine de la vie, que pour la conserver à son cher enfant, qu'elle tenoit entre ses bras, jamais elle ne le voulut abandonner, jusqu'à ce qu'un gros tourbillon de feu & de flâme luy aïant offusqué la vûë, elle fut contrainte de le laisser tomber au milieu du feu ; & ce fut un grand bonheur pour elle, de se trouver, quoique par hazard, à l'endroit par lequel sa compagne s'étoit sauvée avec son petit enfant. Une lumiere confuse [250] qui parut d'abord à nos yeux, jointe aux pleurs & aux sanglots de ces pauvres malheureuses, nous firent dans un même moment appréhender & concevoir le funeste accident qui étoit arrivé : il étoit trop digne de compassion, pour se contenter d'en être seulement les simples spectateurs, comme le fut autrefois Neron de l'embrasement de la Ville de Rome ; ou comme Alexandre, de Persepolis, reduite en cendres par le conseil de ses concubines : nous courûmes tous incessament, pour y apporter le secours dont nous étions capables.

Jamais la pieté d'Enée, qui retira Anchise hors de l'embrasement de Troye ; ni celle de ces trois enfans genereux, qui sauverent leur pere des [251] incendies du Vesuve, ne fut mieux representée que par ces pauvres meres, qui avoient tâché de sauver leurs enfans de ces flâmes dévorantes : l'une étoit couchée dans la neige, avec son petit : l'autre étoit encore à l'ouverture de la cabanne, sans pouvoir en sortir ; & la douleur qu'elle souffroit étoit d'autant plus sensibles, que les flammeches & les charbons tomboient continuellement dessus sa chair.

L'on sçait que le sapin est un bois plein de gomme, que quelques-uns appellent terebentine ; & comme par la violence du feu cette gomme tomboit toute brûlante dessus le corps de cette Sauvagesse, il est à croire qu'elle eût expiré avec son fils dans cet horrible tourment, si Monsieur Henaut [252] ne l'eût, à force de bras, retirée de cet embrasement funeste.

J'entrai dans la cabanne, qui étoit encore toute en feu, pour tâcher de sauver son enfant : mais il étoit trop tard ; & ce petit innocent étoit étouffé dans les flâmes, à demi rôti. Il expira en effet un moment aprés, entre mes bras ; ne me laissant point d'autre consolation, parmi tant de sujets de douleur, que celle de l'avoir baptisé avant mon départ de Nipisiquit. Ce fut pour lors, que me prosternant à genoux avec ce precieux dépôt, j'adorai, avec les sentimens d'une profonde soûmission, la conduite amoureuse de la Providence dans le salut de ses prèdestinez ; puisqu'il m'eût été abso- [253] lument impossible de baptiser cet enfant, qui fut la premiere victime que le Ciel reçut de la Mission que je fis à nos Porte-Croix. J'ensevelis moi-même le corps de ce petit Ange : & on luy rendit solemnellement dans nôtre Chapelle, les honneurs ordinaires ; pour faire voir aux Sauvages le respect & la veneration que la sainte Eglise

conserve religieusement, pour tous les enfans qui meurent dans l'innocence aprés leur Baptême.

On ne peut exprimer les regrets sensibles de cette mere affligée, lorsqu'elle fit reflexion sur la perte & le genre de mort d'un fils unique qu'elle aimoit tendrement. Accablée de douleur & d'amertume par la mort de ce cher [254] enfant, elle bouchoit les oreilles à tout ce qu'on pouvoit luy donner de consolation dans ses disgraces : elle n'avoit un cœur que pour soupirer, une langue que pour se plaindre, des yeux que pour verser des larmes, des pieds & des mains que pour remüer les charbons, & foüiller dans les cendres, afin d'y trouver celuy qui faisoit le plus grand sujet de sa douleur ; en un mot, saisie d'un cruel desespoir, elle se fût étouffée elle-même en nôtre presence, si on ne l'eût empêché d'éxecuter son pernicieux dessein.

Les premiers mouvemens sont pardonnables, parce qu'ils nous ôtent & nous privent du libre usage de la raison : aussi faut-il avoüer que nôtre Sauvagesse paroissoit en quelque [255] maniere excusable, puisque toutes ses actions étoient plûtôt d'une femme outrée & transportée par la violence de la douleur, que d'une personne raisonnable ; & on peut dire qu'elle ne revint de ses emportemens, qu'à même-tems qu'elle fut en état de reflechir que son malheur étoit sans remede.

Le Sieur Henaut prit soin de la penser, avec sa charité ordinaire ; & il eût entierement gueri toutes ses plaies, si les onguents ne luy eussent manqué. Au défaut de nos remedes, les Sauvages en voulurent appliquer des leurs, qui ne servirent qu'à reduire cette pauvre femme à l'extrémité ; soit que ces remedes sauvages fussent incompatibles avec nos on- [256] guents ; soit parce qu'ils tarderent un peu trop long-tems à y appliquer le premier appareil : si bien qu'aprés vingt-deux jours de souffrance, la gangrene se mit dans ses plaies, qui rendoient une puanteur si horrible, que personne n'en pouvoit plus approcher du tout.

Monsieur de Fronsac fit tout ses efforts pour m'empêcher de la voir davantage ; mais enfin, comme il étoit plus juste de déferer aux regles de la charité, qu'à des raisons humaines, de bien-seance & de civilité ; je voulus luy continuer mes services, ne pouvant jamais me résoudre de l'abandonner jusques à la mort. Elle avoit été baptisée & nommée Marie, par l'un de nos Missionnaires : je l'avois [257] disposée pour se confesser ; en sorte que s'étant toûjours acquitée des devoirs d'une bonne Chrêtienne, particulierement sur la fin de sa maladie, elle fit une confession generale de ses pechez, le matin du jour des Cendres, & mourut le soir, me laissant de grandes esperances de son salut.

Le corps resta toute la nuit dans la cabanne ; & Monsieur de Fronsac ne me voulut jamais permettre de la veiller, comme je le souhaitois. Deux François & deux Sauvages furent destinez pour rester auprés de la défunte durant la nuit ; Ejougouloumoüet en étoit du nombre, lequel se persuadant que le cierge beni étoit composé de la graisse d'orignac, il le mangea tout [258] entier. Nous nous en fussions volontiers divertis ; mais il falut ceder à la douleur & à la tristesse, qui nous affligeoient autant qu'on se peut imaginer.

Quelque effort qu'on fit pour transporter le corps au Cimetiere ordinaire, on fut cependant obligé de faire la fosse dans la cabanne même, à cause qu'il étoit impossible d'en approcher, pour l'inection & la puanteur étrange qui en sortoient ; jusques-là même, que le Sieur Henaut voulant s'essuïer la face avec son mouchoir, fut extrêmement surpris de le voir trempé d'une sueur toute bleuë & livide, qui marquoit assez le danger évident d'y gagner quelque maladie

contagieuse. Elle fut enterrée dans sa ca- [259] banne, aprés que j'eus beni son tombeau ; & nous dîmes ensuite la sainte Messe pour le repos de son ame, dans nôtre Chapelle, où tous les François & les Sauvages assisterent, avec beaucoup de devotion.

Son mari cependant, qui ne sçavoit rien de ce qui s'étoit passé durant son absence, arriva de la chasse deux heures aprés que nous eûmes enterré cette Sauvagesse : il pleura amerement la mort de sa femme ; & comme il aimoit tendrement son enfant, il étoit à peu prés comme un autre David, qui demandoit à tout moment, où étoit son cher Absalon. Il visita souvent leur tombeau, sur lesquels étant un jour à genoux, les mains & les yeux élevez vers le [260] Ciel, & le cœur tout transpercé de douleur, on luy entendit prononcer ces paroles en forme de priere : O grand Dieu, qui gouvernes le Soleil & la Lune, qui as créé les orignaux, les loutres & les castors ; appaise-toi, ne sois plus fâché contre moi, & contente-toi des malheurs qui m'accablent : j'avois une femme, tu me l'as ôtée ; j'avois un enfant que j'aimois comme moi-même, & je n'en ai plus, parce que tu l'as voulu : n'en voila t'il pas assez ? Fais-moi donc desormais autant de bien, que je ressens de mal à present : ou si tu n'es pas encore satisfait de ce que je souffre dans mon cœur, fais-moi mourir au plûtôt ; car aussi bien il m'est impossible de vivre davantage.

[261] Mais enfin, comme le tems est un sçavant Medecin, qui apporte des remedes efficaces aux douleurs les plus sensibles, & que d'ailleurs ces Peuples ne font pas grand état d'un homme qui pleure, & qui ne se console pas dans les accidens mêmes les plus fâcheux de la vie humaine ; nôtre Sauvage voulut donner des marques autentiques de la force qu'il avoit dessus son esprit, & convia les Porte-Croix au festin des morts, qu'il leur fit selon la coûtume ordinaire du Païs. Il le commença par une harangue, qui exposoit succintement le sujet pour lequel il les avoit conviez : il ajoûta ensuite une espece d'oraison funebre, où il rapporta les belles qualitez de sa femme, & tout ce que ses [262] ancêtres avoient fait de plus considerable pour les interêts de la Nation : & il finit enfin son discours, en faisant des éloges de son fils ; protestant qu'il eût été un jour un bon chasseur, un grand guerrier, & le digne heritier de la valeur & de la generosité de son pere.

Un profond silence qui suivit immediatement, l'arrêta tout court, aïant les yeux fichez contre terre, comme s'il eût été plongé dans la derniere de toutes les mélancolies, pour mieux exprimer l'amertume qu'il avoit dans le cœur, à cause de la mort de sa femme & de son enfant : puis tout d'un coup, portant la main à ses yeux, pour en essuïer quelques larmes qu'il avoit versées devant cette assemblée, il fit un cri de joie, & dit en même- [263] tems : Que s'il avoit donné des larmes, qu'il n'avoit pû refuser aux défunts qu'il aimoit si tendrement, il vouloit cependant en arrêter le cours, pour correspondre à l'estime que tous les Sauvages avoient conçûë de la grandeur de son courage. Il ajoûta, Que nous étions tous mortels : que la trop grande tristesse & la douleur faisoient perdre l'esprit aux Sauvages : & qu'enfin il faloit se consoler de tous les accidens fâcheux qui nous arrivent dans la vie ; parce que celuy qui a tout fait, & qui gouverne toutes choses, le permettoit ainsi.

Tous les conviez répondirent à cette harangue, par trois ou quatre huées, qu'ils pousserent du fond de leur estomac, en disant à l'ordinaire, [264] *hé, hé, hé ;* c'est ainsi qu'ils approuvent ordinairement les raisons de celuy qui harangue. Nôtre Koucdedaoüi n'eut pas plûtôt reçû ces applaudissemens

publics, qu'il se mit à danser de son mieux, & chanter quelque chanson de guerre, de chasse, pour témoigner à l'assemblée qu'il avoit banni de son cœur tout ce qu'il y avoit eu jusqu'alors de chagrin, de douleur, & de tristesse : il bût ensuite un bon coup d'eau de vie, & donna le reste du flâcon aux plus anciens, pour être distribué aux conviez, avec la sagamite du festin.

C'est une coûtume generalement observée par nos Gaspesiens, de ne se reserver rien du tout de ce qui a été à l'usage des malades, lorsqu'ils [265] viennent à mourir ; afin, disent-ils, d'éloigner autant qu'ils peuvent de devant leurs yeux, tous les objets qui pourroient renouveller leurs peines, par le souvenir & la memoire de leurs parens & de leurs amis ; ils brûlent toutes les hardes qui leur ont servi pendant leur vie : ou bien ils les enterrent avec eux ; afin, disent-ils, que les esprits de ces choses leurs fassent compagnie dans l'autre monde : ou ils en font present aux étrangers, pour reconnoissance des services qu'ils auront rendus aux défunts. Kouededaoüi donna tout ce que sa femme possedoit, aux Sauvages qui avoient assisté sa femme pendant sa maladie. Il resta encore quelques jours avec nous ; mais enfin, soit qu'il se lassât de rester avec [266] les François, soit qu'il ne voulût plus demeurer davantage dans un lieu qui luy avoit été si funeste, il prit la resolution de nous quitter, & d'abandonner la riviere de Sainte-Croix, où je demeurois jusques au Printems, pour y faire la Mission, & disposer les Porte-Croix à recevoir les principes & les élemens du Christianisme.

Il ne me fut pas beaucoup difficile de trouver le sujet de la premiere harangue que je devois faire à ces pauvres Infideles ; il fut à peu prés le même que celuy de Saint Paul, quand il prêcha pour la premiere fois dans Athenes, la Foi de Jesus-Christ aux Areopagites.

Ce grand Apôtre aïant consideré cette fameuse inscrip- [267] tion, que les Atheniens avoient fait graver en lettres d'or sur le frontispice du Temple qu'ils avoient consacré au Dieu Inconnu, *Ignoto Deo* ; prit de là occasion de leur faire connoître, que ce Dieu Inconnu auquel ils rendoient leurs hommages & leurs adorations, étoit celuy-là-même qui avoit fait le Ciel & la Terre ; qui s'étoit fait homme dans le sein d'une Vierge ; qui par un excez d'amour avoit bien voulu expirer sur la Croix, pour le salut de tout le genre humain : que la nature avoit donné des marques de son ressentiment, durant les mortelles agonies de son Calvaire ; & que le Soleil même en avoit souffert de douleur, un éclipse si extraordinaire, que l'un des premiers de l'Areopage, en [268] le voïant s'écria, Qu'il faloit ou que le Dieu de la Nature souffrît, ou que la machine du Monde allât se dissoudre.

L'usage de la Croix, & l'honneur que nos Gaspesiens Infideles rendoient à ce sacré signe de nôtre salut, me donnerent le même sujet de leur expliquer les sacrez Misteres, qu'ils ignoroient dans les tenebres de leurs erreurs & de leur aveuglement. Je leur fis donc concevoir que cette Croix, qu'ils avoient reçûë en partage par une faveur singuliere du Ciel, les devoit porter au culte & à l'adoration de celuy qui l'avoit embrassée pour nôtre amour : qu'ils avoient même des obligations plus étroites que les autres Nations de la Nouvelle [269] France, de professer la Foi de Jesus-Christ ; & que pour ce sujet il faloit quitter leurs erreurs, & recevoir le Baptême, sans lequel ils ne pouvoient pas être sauvez. Ils parurent tres-contens & satisfaits de ce discours, & me promirent de suivre éxactement les avis charitables que je leur donnois ; protestant tous publiquement, qu'ils étoient bien fâchez, de ce que leurs ancêtres avoient

negligé si long-tems le culte du Dieu de la Croix : ils m'offrirent leurs petits enfans, & me prierent de les baptiser, en attendant qu'ils fussent eux-mêmes suffisamment instruits pour le recevoir.

J'accordai la grace du Baptême à cinq ou six de ces enfans, dont le plus âgé de [270] tous ne passoit pas deux ans ; & j'ai cette consolation, que quatre de ces petits innocens joüissent à present de la gloire, étant morts heureusement, quelque-tems aprés leur Baptême.

Je laisse au Lecteur la liberté de juger comme il luy plaira, de l'origine du culte de la Croix parmi cette Nation Infidele ; puisque je n'ai pas de fondement plus solide pour le persuader de cette verité, que le temoignage des anciens Sauvages & des François, confirmé par la Relation qu'en a faite Monseigneur de Saint Vallier, presentement Evêque de Quebec : attendu même que je me suis proposé uniquement dans cette Histoire, d'écrire les choses comme je les ai connuës du- [271] rant tout le tems que j'ai fait la Mission chez nos Gaspesiens Porte-Croix.

Voici cependant, quoiqu'en abregé, quelques raisons principales, qui m'obligerent de croire que la Croix avoit été en veneration parmi ces Barbares, avant la premiere arrivée des François dans leur Païs ; car voulant un jour faire avoüer à ces Infideles, que les Missionnaires qui m'avoient precedé leur avoient enseigné la maniere dont ils devoient adorer la Croix : Hé quoy, me dit le Chef, tu es Patriarche ; tu veux que nous croïons tout ce que tu nous propose, & tu ne veux pas croire ce que nous te disons : Tu n'as pas encore quarante ans, & il n'y en a que deux que tu demeures avec les Sauvages ; & tu [272] prétens sçavoir nos maximes, nos traditions & nos coûtumes mieux que nos ancêtres, qui nous les ont enseignées. Ne vois tu pas encore tous les jours le vieillard Quioudo, qui a plus de six vingts ans ? il a vû le premier navire qui ait abordé dans nôtre Païs : il t'a repeté si souvent que les Sauvages de Mizamichis n'ont pas reçû des Etrangers l'usage de la Croix ; & que ce qu'il en sçait luy-même, il l'a appris par la tradition de ses peres, qui ont vêcu pour le moins aussi long-tems que luy : Tu peux donc inferer que nous l'avions reçû avant que les François vinssent à nos côtes. Mais si tu fais encore quelque difficulté de te rendre à cette raison, en voici une autre, qui te doit entierement [273] convaincre de la verité que tu revoques en doute. Tu as de l'esprit, puisque tu es Patriarche, & que tu parles à Dieu : Tu sçais que la Nation des Gaspesiens s'étend depuis le Cap des Rosiers, jusqu'au Cap Breton : tu n'ignores pas que les Sauvages de Ristigouche sont nos freres & nos compatriotes, qui parlent la même langue que nous ; tu les as quittez pour nous venir voir ; tu les as instruits : tu as vû les vieillards qui ont été baptisez par d'autres Missionnaires que toi ; & cependant nous avons été privez malheureusement de ce bonheur jusqu'à present. Si donc la Croix est la marque sacrée qui distingue les Chrêtiens d'avec les Infideles, comme tu nous l'enseignes ; dis-nous pourquoi les [274] Patriarches nous en auroient-ils donné l'usage, preferablement à nos freres de Ristigouche qu'ils ont baptisez, & qui cependant n'ont pas eu toûjours le signe du Chrêtien en veneration, comme nos ancêtres qui n'ont jamais reçû le Baptême ? Tu vois donc manifestement que ce n'est pas des Missionnaires, que nous avons le mistere de la Croix.

L'on dira que ce raisonnement est sauvage : il est vrai, je l'avouë ; mais il n'en est pas pour cela ni moins persuasif, ni moins convaincant : puisqu'il est vrai de dire, que les Sauvages de Ristigouche sont baptisez, & qu'ils ne portent

point cependant la Croix ; mais bien la figure d'un saumon, qu'ils avoient anciennement penduë au col, comme [275] la marque d'honneur de leur Païs : Car il est à remarquer que la coûtume de tous nos Gaspesiens a toûjours été, de porter quelque figure particuliere, qui sont comme des armoiries qui les distinguent des autres Sauvages, par rapport aux differens endroits où ils resident ordinairement.

Voila tout ce que j'ai pû reconnoître de l'origine du culte de la Croix, & ce que nous avons fait pour en procurer le rétablissement parmi ces Peuples, qui n'ont jamais eu connoissance parfaite d'aucune Divinité ; aïant toûjours été, comme la pluspart de ceux d'aujourd'hui, insensibles en matiere de Religion.

Il est vrai que plusieurs de nos Gaspesiens souhaitent à present se faire instruire, de- [276] mandent le Baptême, & paroissent même à l'exterieur assez bons Chrêtiens, aprés avoir été baptisez ; zelez pour les Prieres ordinaires du soir & du matin, modestes dans les Eglises, & portez à se confesser de leurs pechez, pour s'approcher dignement de la sainte Communion : mais on peut dire que le nombre est tres-petit, de ceux qui vivent selon les regles du Christianisme, & qui ne retombent dans les déreglemens d'une vie brutale & sauvage ; soit à cause de l'insensibilité naturelle de ces Peuples pour les choses du salut ; soit à raison de l'yvrognerie, de leurs erreurs, de leurs superstitions, & autres défauts considerables ausquels ils sont extrémement adonnez : d'où vient que quoique plusieurs [277] Missionnaires aïent beaucoup travaillé pour la conversion de ces Infideles, on n'y remarque cependant, non plus que chez les autres Nations Sauvages de la Nouvelle France, de Christianisme solidement établi ; & voila peut-être le sujet pour lequel les RR. PP. Jesuites, qui ont cultivé avec tant de ferveur & de charité, les Missions qu'ils avoient autrefois au Cap Breton, Miscou & Nipisiguit, où nos Gaspesiens resident encore aujourd'hui, ont trouvé à propos de les abandonner, pour en établir d'autres aux Nations éloignées, & situées au haut du fleuve de Saint Laurent, dans l'esperance d'y faire des progrez plus considerables ; quoique d'ailleurs, selon le témoignage de ces Re- [278] verends Peres, les Gaspesiens soient les plus dociles de tous les Sauvages de la Nouvelle France, & les plus susceptibles des instructions du Chrianisme.

Il est vrai que le peu de progrez que j'avois fait depuis quatre ans que je travaillois à la conversion de ces Peuples, avec autant d'application qu'il m'étoit possible, joint au déplaisir sensible de ne pas trouver toute la disposition que je souhaitois du côté de mes Gaspesiens, dont la pluspart n'étoient Chrêtiens qu'en apparence, nonobstant les travaux infatiguables de tant d'illustres & zelez Missionnaires qui m'avoient precedé, me fit hesiter d'abandonner l'ouvrage, n'aïant pas lieu d'en esperer de plus heu- [279] reux succez : cependant, pour ne rien précipiter dans une affaire d'une si grande consequence, je demandai au Saint Esprit les lumieres qui m'étoient necessaires, pour connoître quelle étoit la volonté de Dieu, pour m'y abandonner entierement. Je consultai les personnes les plus éclairées, & sur tout le R. P. Valentin le Roux nôtre Superieur, comme Dieu même ; & je peux dire avec verité, que la resolution qu'il m'envoïa dans ma Mission, me servit de regle, & m'engagea d'y rester encore l'espace de huit ans, pour cultiver cette vigne du Seigneur. Voici les propres termes de sa Lettre.

*J'ai reçû une joie tres-sensible, d'apprendre par les deux vôtres,* [280] *l'une*

*du quinze Avril, l'autre du huit Mai, la continuation de vôtre santé au milieu des travaux Apostoliques, où vous éxercez vôtre zele avec tant de succez & d'édification : il est vrai que dans ce plaisir extréme que j'ai eu en recevant vos Lettres, causé par cette preference d'estime que je fais de vôtre personne, & par la tendresse singuliere que j'ai pour vous, je ne crois pas avoir reçû une douleur plus sensible depuis que je suis en Canada, que de voir par un endroit de vôtre derniere, le dessein où vous êtes d'abandonner vôtre poste, & même de retourner en France.*

*Ie vous avouë, mon tres-cher Pere, que dans mille mortifications que je reçois tous les jours, & qui sont comme inseparables de mon ministere, vous êtes* [281] *la personne sur qui j'avois fait plus de fond : la resolution que j'avois remarquée en vous l'année derniere, de faire un sacrifice perpetuel de vos travaux à nos anciennes Missions, qui renaissent aujourd'hui, par une conduite particuliere de la Providence, & cette onction de grace qui me paroissoit en vous, me consoloient infiniment. I'en ai beni Dieu mille fois depuis vôtre départ, le conjurant tous les jours, aux pieds des Autels, de vous combler de ses benedictions. Ie voïois même nos autres Peres dans le même dessein ; & je fondois là dessus mes projets & mes esperances pour la gloire du Seigneur. Ie les croïois plus sûres & plus certaines de vôtre part, que de tous les autres ; mais je conçois que mes pechez me rendent indigne de cette* [282] *consolation : je leur attribuë ce changement où vous paroissez ; je ne merite pas de voir fleurir de mon tems nos Missions, dont le succez dépend uniquement de la fermeté & de la perseverance des Religieux. En cela, mon tres-cher Pere, vous serez toûjours le maître de vôtre sort : je me reserve seulement le droit de representer, d'exhorter, de prier, de conjurer de la part de Dieu ; laissant aprés cela une entiere liberté aux Religieux, lorsque nonobstant les prieres instantes du Superieur & de l'ami, qui marquent l'ordre de Dieu, & malgré la necessité où se trouvent nos Missions, ils souhaiteront de quitter l'ouvrage ; car le sacrifice doit être libre & volontaire.*

*Mais enfin, mon cher Pere, considerez, je vous prie, l'éxemple de* Jesus-Christ, *ce premier Mis-* [283] *sionnaire du monde, dont nous devons être les imitateurs, & luy rendre dans la personne de nos freres, ce qu'il a fait pour nous & pour eux, en nous venant éclairer dans les voies du salut, avec des travaux & des obstacles continuels : sa Mission a été constante ; & depuis qu'il l'a commencée, il y a perseveré tout le reste de sa vie ; il l'a consommée par le sacrifice de son propre Sang :* Et nos debemus pro fratribus nostris animas ponere. *C'est jusques-là que nous devons aller, pour nous rendre recommandables devant luy par nôtre ministere ; & quoique par sa mort il soit entré dans la gloire, ce Missionnaire ne laisse pas d'éxercer sncore les mêmes offices : il continuë tous les jours une espece de Mission, en descendant sur nos Autels, où il s'attache avec une perseverance in-* [284] *violable ; il en remplit les fonctions à tous momens, par sa grace interieure, & par les soins d'une prouidence de Pere sur son Eglise :* Ecce ego vobiscum sum usque ad consummationem sæculi. *Voila le zele de perseverance sur lequel se sont reglez les Apôtres & tous les hommes Apostoliques, & qui fera devant Dieu le discernement de l'amour inviolable que nous aurons pour luy. Si les Apôtres s'étoient bornez à un certain nombre d'années ; s'ils s'étoient érigez en Missionnaires de trente-six mois, la verité Evangelique n'auroit pas eu tant de succez pour la conversion du monde : ils s'en sont fait un vœu & une necessité inviolable, & ils n'ont jamais cessé, pendant qu'ils ont eu un soûpir de vie. Cet éloignement de leur Patrie ne leur a point cause de regret, à l'exem-* [285] *ple du Fils de Dieu, qui avoit quitté la sienne pour venir dans le monde :* Exivi à patre,

& veni in mundum. *Ces travaux insurmontables, cette faim, cette disette, ces persecutions, les mépris, les gibets & les rouës, l'ingratitude, & même le peu de succez de leurs peines, ne les ont point rebuté : au contraire, tout cela n'a fait qu'enflâmer leur zele, pour s'acquitter de leur Mission avec plus d'éxactitude, pour consommer leur course, & le ministere de la parole Apostolique qu'ils avoient reçû de Dieu. Quelle application n'auroient-ils pas donné à la conversion de ce nouveau Monde, qui étoit alors inconnu, & dont Dieu nous a destinez les Apôtres?* Posuit tanquam morti destinatos. *Et quel reproche Dieu ne vous feroit-il pas un jour, d'avoir tiré la faux* [286] *de la moisson, presque aussi tôt que vous l'y avez mise? Quel compte ne rendriez vous pas à Dieu, de tant d'ames qui periroient, faute d'avoir perseveré à leur annoncer la parole, ou d'avoir jetté la semence, & ensuite de ne l'avoir pas cultivée? Quelle ingratitude à vous, de laisser perir des ames pour lesquelles* Jesus-Christ *est mort, faute de donner la même application que* Jesus-Christ *a donnée pour nous jusqu'à la mort?* Perit in tua scientia frater pro quo Christus mortuus est. *Vous n'ignorez pas, mon tres-cher Pere, que nos Missions ne sont que de purs amusemens, si l'on ne ne se fixe pour quelques années dans les principales, à cause de la diversité des langues : il faut deux ou trois ans à un Religieux, auparavant qu'il soit* [287] *bien en état de se faire entendre ; & s'il faut le changer après cela, nous travaillerions inutilement, nous serions des Missionnaires de nom, & non pas d'effet : les Heretiques de la Nouvelle Angleterre qui sont à vos portes, vous confondroient en ce point ; & je ne sçai pas ce que nous pourrions répondre à Dieu, quand il nous reprocheroit ce peu de concert que nous aurions pour sa gloire. Il s'agit même, mon cher Pere, d'établir, ou plûtôt de rétablir nos Missions ; puisqu'elles ne font encore que de commencer à se remettre, aprés un intervale de quarante années : il s'agit de montrer l'éxemple à ceux qui viendront aprés nous ; & si nous mettions les choses sur un pied de ne venir ici qu'en passant, ne serions-nous pas responsables du peu de zele des autres à nô-* [288] *tre imitation? Si nous avions le don des langues, comme autrefois les Apôtres, nous aurions quelque excuse, en disant qu'un autre seroit aussi-bien que nous en état de s'acquitter d'une Mission ; mais puisque Dieu ne nous donne pas cette grace, il desire de nous que nôtre zele y supplée, par une perseverance & une application habituelle : & outre cette necessité de la langue, la grace que Dieu vous donne d'édifier beaucoup par vôtre conversation ; cet attrait & cette onction que j'ai remarquez en vous, pour la conversion de ces pauvres aveugles ; la conoissance que vous avez de leurs esprits, & la maniere de les prendre ; l'ascendant que Dieu vous a donné sur ces Barbares, sont des avantages qu'un autre ne sçauroit acquerir que par un long travail, & qui* [289] *marquent aussi une vocation & un choix particulier que Dieu fait de vous pour cette Mission. J'ai mille raisons qui me font comprendre la necessitè que nous avons de nous fixer dans nos Missions : je tâcherai d'en donner l'éxemple à mes freres, par le sacrifice perpetuel que j'ai fait de mon repos, de mon talent, de mon honneur & de ma vie, au ministere Apostolique dans ce Païs ; & je croirois que Dieu ne me le pardonneroit jamais, si je venois à me relâcher de ma resolution, à cause du mauvais éxemple que je donnerois aux autres, qui à mon imitation en feroient de même : je les vois tous assez fermes, & assez résolus ; mais en verité, je puis vous dire que si vous veniez à lâcher le pied, comme les autres sont beaucoup arrêtez par* [290] *l'éxemple de vôtre ferveur, que je leur ai souvent proposé, afin de les animer : vous détruiriez l'ordre & les moïens des desseins de Dieu, & ce que nous tâchons d'advancer avec sa sainte grace, pour leur donner la perseverance. Vous auriez une douleur*

*éternelle, de voir des Missions tomber dans la décadence, au moment qu'elles commencent à prendre cet esprit de Religion & de vertu qui nous doit animer, pour répondre à ce que le Seigneur demande de nous dans nôtre Ministere. Vous êts peut-être dégoûté, par le peu de fruit que vous remarquez dans la conversion des Sauvages ; mais enfin, mon cher Pere, pourriez-vous un jour faire valoir cette excuse devant Dieu, étant instruit comme vous êtes des veritez de nôtre Foi ? Considerez. je vous prie, que c'est à nous à* [291] *planter & à arroser ; mais que c'est à Dieu de donner les accroissemens, & de produire les fruits. Nous nous sommes suffisamment acquittez de nôtre obligation, quand nous avons annoncé la verité ; ce n'est pas à nous de la rendre feconde, mais de reconnoître nôtre neant, d'adorer les jugemens de Dieu, & de luy dire :* Quod debuimus facere fecimus, servi inutiles sumus. *Souvenez-vous que quand le Fils de Dieu donne la Mission à ses Apôtres, il leur ordonne de prêcher l'Evangile à toutes les Nations ; non seulement à celles qui croiront à leur parole, mais encore à celles qui n'y ajoûteront point de foi.* Qui crediderit salvus erit, qui non crediderit condemnabitur. *Dieu tire également sa gloire de la perte des uns, du salut & de la sanctification des autres ;* [292] *mais il ne tirera parfaitement sa gloire de ceux qui ne croiront pas, qu'en tant qu'il aura eu soin de leur faire annoncer la verité. Nous avons l'avantage de justifier Dieu au jugement, dans la condamnation des Infideles qui ne seront pas convertis à nos paroles ; & si nous ne cherchons que la gloire de Dieu, un Missionnaire doit être bien plus content dans le peu de succez & de fruit des Missions de ce Païs, que s'il operoit des conversions aussi nombreuses que dans l'Eglise naissante, & même dans nos derniers siecles aux Indes* Orientales & Occidentales, *où un homme baptisoit en un jour des quatre & cinq mille ames ; car Dieu est également glorifié dans la dureté de nos Sauvages & dans leur reprobation, aprés qu'on leur a annoncé la Foi, comme dans la con-* [293] *version des autres. Vous avez encore cet avantage, que dans les grandes conversions on y peut trouver de la propre complaisance, de la gloire & de la satisfaction sensible ; au lieu que dans vôtre sort, vous n'y regardez qu'une gloire de Dieu, cachée dans les ombres de nôtre Foi. Cette steterilité de vos travaux, ne flate en rien l'amour propre ; & vous n'y trouverez de gloire que pour l'eternité, lorsque vous verrez Dieu justifié dans la perte de ces ames, & glorifié par le soin que vous aurez eu, & ces assiduitez que vous aurez données à leur conversion. Mais serez-vous en état de le faire, si aprés avoir èbauché l'ouvrage, vous la bandonnez à un autre, qui en fera de même á votre éxemple ? Le Fils de Dieu, qui étoit venu principalement pour instruire les* [294] *Iuifs :* Ad oves, quæ perierunt domus Israël, *En a-t'il beaucoup convertis, à l'exception de douze Apôtres chancelans, & de quelques Disciples ? Qu'a t'il trouvé, sinon de l'aveuglement, de la dureté dans tout le reste de son Peuple, des mépris, de l'ingratitude, & enfin une mort infâme ? mais toute sa vûë étoit de justifier Dieu dans leur perte ; & la pureté & la sainteté de ses intentions le soûtenoit dans la sterilité de ses travaux. Il a perseveré jusques à la mort dans sa Mission : il est venu pour être le Sauveur de tous les hommes, & il est mort pour tous : il est mort pour ceux qui se damnent, comme pour les plus grands Saints ; afin que son sang plaidât pour la justice, & magnifiât la misericorde de son Pere dans le jugement des reprouvez. Il a crû que* [295] *son Sang ne se prodiguoit pas d'être répandu* in ruinam, & in resurrectionem multorum ; *pourvû qu'il pût dire,* quid ultra potui facere vineæ meæ ? expectavi ut faceret uvas, & fecit labruscas. *Ne veut il pas que l'on jette la semence de sa parole, aussi bien sur des cœurs insensibles que sur des cœurs dociles ? & s'il faloit se rebuter par le peu de fruit de nos travaux, où est le Pre-*

*dicateur qui pourroit monter deux fois en Chaire, dans les Païs les plus Catholiques ? Tant de bouches sont ouvertes en France, pour la reformation des mœurs ; cependant combien voit on operer de conversions ? & pour un million de Predications, de Catechismes, d'Instructions familieres, combien y en a-t'il qui rabatent d'un seul point le leur* [296] *vanité, de l'esprit d'interêt, d'impudicité, de médisance, de ressentiment, &c. ? Ils n'ont donc point d'autre ressource, que celle de dire qu'ils s'acquittent de ce que Dieu demande de leur Ministere ; luy laissant operer la conversion ou la sanctification, par la grace interieure, & enfin de le justifier un jour dans son jugement :* Ut justificeris in sermonibus tuis, & vincas cum judicaris. *Il semble que le tems & l'heure de la Providence n'est pas encore venu pour les Nations de ce nouveau Monde ; les moissons ne blanchissent pas encore, il est vrai : mais que sçavez-vous si Dieu n'a pas destiné de l'accorder enfin quelque jour à nos larmes, à nos soûpirs & à nos travaux ; & si nous ne serons pas coupables des retardemens que* [297] *Dieu y apporteroit, si nous venons à manquer de fermeté & de constance dans notre vocation ? Du moins, mon cher Pere, pouvez-vous esperer de sauver des enfans, ou des vieillards moribons, & même quelques adultes, particulierement des enfans, que l'on instruit peu à peu : & quand vous ne sauveriez qu'une seule ame, elle vaut plus que la conquête de tout le Monde, aprés que Dieu a donné son Sang pour elle. Les travaux de toute votre vie seroient tres-bien emploïez, selon les principes de notre Foi ; que Saint Ignace, Patriarche de nos Freres ajoints dans la conversion de ce nouveau Monde, se seroit estimé heureux, si pour fruit de ses travaux & du sacrifice de sa vie, il avoit pû esperer de convertir une seule des Courtisanes de Rome. Ie ne sçau-* [298] *rois croire que l'attrait de la Patrie soit l'occasion ou le sujet de votre dégoût, & peut-être de votre chagrin : nous avons fait par notre Profession un renoncement si general à pere, à mere, à Païs, à amis, que tout cela ne doit plus avoir de charme pour vous. Votre vocation même dans ce nouveau Monde, qui n'est pas differente de celle des Apôtres, a dû faire mourir tous ces ressentimens de la Nature : ces hommes divins n'avoient plus de Patrie ; où plûtôt les endroits où ils étoient destinez, leur en tenoient lieu. Ie vous trouvai l'année derniere dans les sentimens assez conformes à ceux de la grace sur cet article. Vous me disiez que cet éloignement du Païs & des proches, étoit ce qui vous plaisoit le plus ; & que vous n'auriez jamais de regret à votre vocation en Canada, par* [299] *cette consideration, que même vous vöiez bien qu'elle seroit la source de votre salut. Or ce seroit, mon tres-cher Pere, en avoir bien-tôt changé de pensée, ou bien mal reconnoître la grace que Dieu vous auroit fait, que de vous lasser au milieu de votre course, de former des desseins si opposez à ceux de Dieu sur votre personne, & aux attraits de sa sainte grace particulierement dans les conjonctures presentes, où certaines personnes qui nous caressent à l'exterieur, ne seroient peut être point fâchez de vous en voir rappellé par des ordres superieurs. Sçavez-vous bien que depuis deux ans, sa Grandeur me presse de ne pas souffrir que nos Missionnaires soient plus de trois ans attachez à une même Mission ? Ie vois bien que l'on surprend, par des artifices de* [300] *Demon, la droiture de ses intentions, pour faire échoüer par ce möien les entrepises de son zele & du notre ; & vous ne vöiez pas que vous favorisez ces desseins de l'esprit de tenebres, au préjudice des François & des Sauvages, qui ont une entiere confiance en vous, comme Monsieur Richard Denys de Fronsac me l'écrit. Ie ne finirois jamais, mon cher Pere, si je suivois le torrent de ma plume sur cette matiere, & sur la mortification que me cause votre dessein : c'est le Demon qui me traverse dans la personne que je croïois la plus intrepide ; mais je prierai Dieu avec tant d'ardeur, pour vous attirer la perse-*

*verance, que j'espere encore du changement, & que du moins vous ne penseserez plus à quitter les Missions.*

[301] *Au reste, s'il ne s'agit que de venir hiverner avec nous, vous jugez bien que j'y trouverai ma plus grande joie. Vous pourriez retourner l'Eté prochain, si vous reprenez, comme je l'espere, votre premiere resolution, où je vous voïois l'année derniere ; sinon vous demeurerez ceans, autant de tems qu'il vous plaira : vous en serez toûjours le maître, aprés avoir entendu mes raisons, & ce que l'onction de la grace vous inspirera. Si vous venez hiverner avec nous, je vous prie de disposer Monsieur Richard Denys, en sorte qu'il n'attende personne jusques au Printems prochain ; n'aïant à present que quatre Prêtres ceans, de seize, dont vous êtes douze partagez aux Missions. Le cher Pere Exuper, dont vous connoissez le zele & la vertu, est arri-* [302] *vé depuis peu à nôtre secours : il faudra même que je monte au Fort de Frontenac, l'Eté prochain, avec Monsieur le Comte de Frontenac nôtre Gouverneur, pour ordonner la découverte du Mexique, en vertu des ordres de la Cour, & visiter nos Missions. Ma presence est encore necessaire au Mont-Roïal, où les Peuples démandent, avec plus d'empressement que jamais, un établissement de nôtre Ordre ; & Messieurs du Seminaire, qui en sont les Seigneurs, y consentent. Le cher Pere Zenobbe Membré est au Fort dés le Printems dernier, avec les Peres Gabriël de la Ribourd, Loüis Hennepin, Luc Buisset, & doivent aller en Mission aux découvertes que l'on va faire. C'est, comme vous voïez, une grosse Communauté pour ce Païs. Frere Leonard est extré-* [303] *mement malade ; on ne sçait encore quelle en doit être la suite. Le V. P. Luc Filliastre est aussi incommodé ; mais il n'y a pas de danger. Nous avons deux Freres Laïcs Novices, qui font assez bien : l'un est cousin de feu Monsieur Bazire ; & l'autre est le fils de Maître George de la Coste de Beaupré. Tous nos chers & venerables Peres, & Frere Leonard, vous salüent avec affection. Il n'est rien arrivé ici de nouveau, qui merite d'être écrit ; sinon la mort de Monsieur Filion, Prêtre, qui s'est noïé dans le fleuve. Il est universellement regretté, comme un Missionnaire parfaitement accompli. Priez Dieu pour moi ; offrez-luy tous les jours les interêts de nôtre pauvre Mission ; & soïez persuadé que je suis* [304] *avec affection,* Vôtre tres-humble & tres-obeïssant Serviteur en Jesus-Christ, Frere Valentin le Roux, Superieur indigne des Recollets de la nouvelle France.

Il n'est pas croïable combien la lecture de cette Lettre me donna de consolation. Penetré vivement de la volonté de Dieu, & la reconnoissant visiblement dans celle de mon Superieur, je conçûs de nouvelles esperances pour la conversion de ces Peuples, & je pris resolution de me fixer dans cette Mission ; en attendant avec d'autant plus de patience les fruits qu'il plairoit au Seigneur d'y produire par sa grace & sa misericorde, que parmi le grand nombre de nos Sauvages, qui me pa- [305] roissoient insensibles & impenetrables aux veritez les plus communes du Christianisme, je voïois quelques Familles Gaspesiennes qui travailloient avec application à leur salut, prenoient plaisir à se faire instruire, assistoient avec devotion à la sainte Messe, & vivoient en assez bons Chrêtiens.

La vie errante & vagabonde de ces Peuples étant incontestablement un des principaux obstacles à leur conversion, je sollicitai Monsieur Denys de Fronsac, de nous accorder une espace de terrein à Nipisiguit, propre à la culture de la terre ; afin de les rendre sedentaires, les habituer, & les humaniser parmi nous. Ce Seigneur, qui souhaitoit avec passion de voir le [306] Christianisme établi dans cette vaste étenduë de Païs qu'il possede, y donnoit les mains avec plaisir :

il en avoit fait agréer la proposition, & former la resolution aux principaux de nos Sauvages ; mais la perte considerable qu'il fit de son vaisseau, qui perit à l'Isle Percée, par une tempête la plus violente que l'on ait jamais vûë dans ces quartiers, jointe au retardement de deux navires, qui manquerent deux années consecutives à luy apporter, selon qu'ils s'y étoient obligez, tout ce qui luy étoit necessaire pour l'entretien de ses Habitations, rompit toutes les mesures que nous avions prises, non-seulement d'établir une Mission sedentaire à Nipisiguit ; mais encore au Cap Breton, où le [307] R. P. Valentin le Roux nôtre Superieur, devoit, selon le projet que nous avions fait, envoïer deux de nos Missionnaires.

Ces fâcheux accidens ne me rebuterent pas cependant de continuer ma Mission, afin de conserver dans la pieté le petit troupeau de Chrêtiens, qui faisoient toute ma consolation, parmi une infinité de chagrins qui m'accabloient ; ne voïant d'un côté qu'une insensibilité surprenante des anciens, à recevoir le Christianisme ; & de l'autre, une attache & une opiniâtreté invincible dans ces Sauvages, à suivre & à croire les erreurs, les superstitions, & les traditions fabuleuses de leurs ancêtres, dont la plus extravagante est, à mon avis, celle [308] qui regarde l'immortalité de l'ame.

## CHAPITRE XII.

*De la croïance des Gaspesiens, touchant l'immortalité de l'Ame.*

CEUX qui ont fait mourir dans leurs opinions erronées, l'ame avec le corps, comme un Epicure & un Sardanapale, étoient bien dignes de compassion ; puisqu'eux-mêmes vouloient cesser d'être hommes, pour devenir semblables aux bêtes : & il faut avoüer que Pytagore ne connoissoit gueres bien, tout sçavant qu'il étoit, l'excellence d'une ame raisonnable, lorsqu'il la logeoit aprés la mort, [309] par sa Metampsicose, dans le corps des animaux les plus vils & les plus immondes de la terre. Nos Gaspesiens n'ont jamais suivi ni l'une, ni l'autre de ces deux opinions ; quoique la pensée qu'ils ont euë autrefois, & que plusieurs ont encore aujourd'hui de l'immortalité de l'Ame, ne soit pas moins ridicule que le sujet même qui leur a persuadé que nos ames étoient immortelles : c'est pourquoy, tout abîmez & ensevelis qu'ils ont été durant plusieurs siecles dans une profonde ignorance de nos divins Misteres, jamais ils n'ont connu quelle étoit la dignité, la grandeur & la sainteté de l'ame raisonnable, soit par rapport à son principe, soit par rapport à sa fin, [310] qui n'est autre que Dieu même ; aussi ne faut-il pas s'étonner si l'erreur & l'imposture ont été les seuls fondemens de leur croïance à son égard, selon la tradition de leurs ancêtres, qui porte : Que l'un des plus considerables de la Nation tomba dangereusement malade ; & qu'aprés avoir perdu l'usage de tous les sens, dans les étranges convulsions de sa maladie, il revint à soi, & dit aux Sauvages qui luy demanderent où il avoit été si long-tems, Qu'il venoit du Païs des Ames, où toutes celles des Gaspesiens qui mouroient se retiroient aprés la mort. Il ajoûta, Que par une faveur extraordinaire, qui n'avoit encore jamais été accordée à qui que ce soit, la Papkoot- [311] parout,

Gouverneur & Souverain de ce Païs, luy avoit donné la permission de retourner au monde, pour dire aux Gaspesiens des nouvelles du Païs des Ames, qui leur avoit été jusqu'alors inconnu, & leur presenter de sa part certains fruits, qu'il assûra être la nourriture de ces Ames, qu'il alloit rejoindre pour toûjours. Il expira en effet, en achevant ces paroles : & cette imposture, qu'ils prirent pour une verité indubitable, fut plus que suffisante pour les persuader que les Ames, aprés la sortie de leurs corps, avoient un lieu où elles alloient demeurer. Il n'en falut pas davantage pour déterminer quelques-uns des plus hardis de nos Sauvages, d'y faire un voïage en corps & en ame [312] pendant leur vie ; attendu que ce Païs n'étoit éloigné & separé du leur, que par le trajet d'un étang de quarante à cinquante lieuës, qu'on traversoit facilement à gué.

Il se presenta bien-tôt une occasion favorable de contenter leur curieuse resolution, rendant service à l'un de leurs amis, qui ne se pouvant consoler de la mort de son fils unique qu'il aimoit tendrement, les conjura tous, & les engagea par les presens ordinaires, à luy tenir compagnie dans le voïage qu'il avoit resolu de faire au Païs des Ames, pour en retirer son fils. Il n'eut pas beaucoup de peine à persuader ce voïage, à des gens qui ne demandoient pas mieux que de l'entreprendre. Ils se trouverent [313] aussi bien-tôt en état de partir, & de commencer cette course perilleuse, qui fait encore aujourd'hui l'étonnement de toute la Nation Gaspesienne, laquelle pour lors n'avoit jamais entendu parler d'une entreprise si extraordinaire. En effet, ces Voïageurs s'étant munis de tous les vivres qui leur étoient necessaires, armez de leurs arcs, fléches, carquois, casse-têtes, & de plusieurs perches de neuf à dix pieds de hauteur, se mirent à l'eau, & marcherent à grandes journées, avec beaucoup de peines & de fatigues. Le soir étant venu, ils piquerent dans le sable quelques-unes de leurs perches, pour en former une espece de brancart ou de cabanne, afin de s'y reposer durant la nuit ; ce qu'ils [314] observerent toûjours dans la continuation de ce penible voïage, jusqu'à ce que plusieurs d'entr'eux étant morts de fatigues, les cinq ou six autres qui restoient encore en vie, enfin, arriverent heureusement au Païs des Ames, qu'ils cherchoient avec tant d'empressement.

Comme nos Gaspesiens, aussi bien que tous les autres Sauvages de la Nouvelle France, ont crû jusqu'à present, qu'il y a un esprit particulier en chaque chose, même dans celles qui sont inanimées, qui suivent les défunts dans l'autre Monde ; afin de leur rendre autant de service aprés la mort, qu'ils en ont reçû pendant la vie : ils disent que nos Voïageurs furent également surpris & consolez, d'y voir [315] à leur arrivée une infinité d'esprits d'orignaux, de castors, de chiens, de canots, de raquettes, qui voltigeoient agreablement devant leurs yeux, & qui par je ne sçai quel langage inconnu, leur firent comprendre qu'ils étoient tous au service de leurs peres ; mais qu'un moment aprés ils penserent mourir de crainte & de fraïeur, lorsqu'approchant d'une cabanne semblable à celles qu'ils avoient dans leur Païs, ils apperçûrent un homme, ou plûtôt un geant, armé d'une grosse massuë, de son arc, de ses fléches & de son carquois, qui leur parla en ces termes, avec des yeux étincelans de colere, & un ton de voix qui marquoit toute son indignation : Qui que vous soïez, disposez- [316] vous à mourir, puisque vous avez eu la temerité de passer le trajet, & de venir tout vivans dans le Païs des Morts ; car je suis le Papkootparout, le Gardien, le Maître, le Gouverneur & le Souverain de toutes les Ames. En effet, outré qu'il étoit jusqu'à la fureur, de l'attentat que nos Sauvages avoient

commis, il les alloit assommer à grands coups de cette horrible massuë qu'il avoit en main, lorsque ce pauvre pere vivement penetré de douleur de la mort de son fils unique, le conjura plûtôt par ses larmes & par ses soûpirs, que par ses paroles, d'excuser la temerité de son entreprise, qui à la verité meritoit tous les châtimens de sa juste colere, s'il n'en vouloit adoucir la ri- [317] gueur, en consideration d'un pere qui ne se croïoit coupable, que parce qu'il avoit trop de tendresse & d'inclination pour son enfant. Décoches contre nous, si tu veux, toutes les fléches de ton carquois ; accable-moi, par la pesanteur de ta massuë, continua ce pere affligé, en luy presentant son estomac & sa tête, pour recevoir les coups de l'un & de l'autre, puisque tu es le maître absolu de ma vie & de ma mort : mais enfin, s'il te reste encore quelques sentimens d'humanité, de tendresse & de compassion pour les mortels, je te suplie d'agréer les presens que nous avons apportez du Païs des Vivans, & de nous recevoir au nombre de tes amis. Ces paroles si soûmises & si res- [318] pectueuses, toucherent de compassion le cœur de ce petit Pluton, lequel s'étant rendu luy-même sensible à la douleur de ce pere affligé, luy dit de prendre bon courage ; qu'il luy pardonnoit pour cette fois l'attentat qu'il venoit de commettre ; & qu'enfin, pour le combler de graces & de consolation, il luy donneroit avant son départ l'ame de son fils : mais qu'en attendant cette faveur extraordinaire, il vouloit bien se divertir avec luy, & joüer une partie de Ledelstaganne ; c'est le jeu ordinaire de nos Gaspesiens.

Ce discours obligeant dissipa entierement toutes les inquietudes & les apprehensions de nos Voïageurs, qui mirent au jeu tout ce qu'ils avoient apporté de plus considerable [319] de la Gaspesie. Papkootparout mit pour son compte du bled d'Inde, du petun, & quelques fruits, qu'il assûroit être la nourriture de ces Ames. Ils joüerent avec beaucoup d'application, depuis le matin jusques au soir. Nos Voïageurs cependant demeurerent les victorieux ; ils gagnerent le bled d'Inde & le petun de Papkootparout, qui leur donna l'un & l'autre avec d'autant plus de plaisir, qu'il crut que ces hommes meritoient de vivre, qui avoient eu le bonheur de gagner tout ce que les Morts avoient de plus precieux & de plus rare dans le Païs des Ames. Il leur commanda de les planter dans la Gaspesie ; les assûrant que toute la Nation en recevroit un avantage inconcevable : & [320] voila, disent nos Sauvages d'aujourd'hui, la maniere dont le bled d'Inde & le tabac sont venus dans leur Païs, selon la tradition de leurs ancêtres.

Pendant que le pere se réjoüissoit de sa bonne fortune, voici que le fils arrive invisiblement dans la cabanne. On entendoit bien, à la verité, le chant de plusieurs esprits assez distinctement, & la réjoüissance qui se faisoit entre ces Ames ; mais ce n'étoit pas là ce que le pere demandoit : il souhaitoit, suivant la promesse qu'on luy avoit faite, d'avoir l'Ame de son fils, qui demeura toûjours invisible ; mais qui devint dans un instant, grosse comme une noix, par le commandement de Papkootparout, qui la prit entre [321] ses mains, la serra bien étroitement dans un petit sac, & la donna à nôtre Sauvage, avec ordre de retourner incessamment dans son Païs ; d'étendre immediatement aprés son arrivée, le cadavre de son fils au milieu d'une cabanne faite exprés ; d'y remettre cette ame dans son corps ; & sur tout, de prendre garde qu'il n'y eût aucune ouverture, de crainte, luy dit-il, que l'ame n'en sorte, & ne retourne au Païs, qu'elle ne quittoit qu'avec des repugnances extrémes.

Le pere reçut ce sac animé avec joie, & prit congé de ce Pluton Sauvage,

aprés avoir vû & éxaminé curieusement tout ce qu'il y avoit de plus considerable dans le Gouvernement de Papkootparout : [322] sçavoir le lieu tenebreux où couchoient les Ames méchantes, qui n'étoit couvert que de branches de sapin toutes seches & mal arrangées : celuy des bons Sauvages, n'avoit rien que de charmant & d'agreable, par une infinité de belles écorces qui ornoient le dehors & le dedans de leur cabanne, où le Soleil venoit les consoler deux fois le jour, & renouvelloit les branches de sapin & de cedre, qui ne perdoient jamais leur verdure naturelle : enfin, une infinité d'esprit de chiens, de canots, de raquettes, d'arcs, de fléches, dont les Ames se servoient pour leur divertissement.

Remarquez, s'il vous plaît, que depuis ce voïage imaginaire, ils n'ont pas crû seule- [323] ment que les Ames étoient immortelles ; mais ils se sont encore persuadez, par une étrange rêverie, que dans tout ce qui étoit à leur usage, comme canots, raquettes, arcs, fléches, & autres choses, il y avoit un esprit particulier, qui accompagnoit toûjours aprés la mort, celuy qui s'en étoit servi pendant la vie : & c'est justement pour ce sujet & par cette fole imagination, qu'ils enterrent avec les défunts tout ce qu'ils possedoient étant au monde, dans la pensée que l'esprit de chaque chose en particulier, leur rend les mêmes services dans le Païs des Ames, qu'ils faisoient lorsqu'ils étoient en vie.

Nos Voïageurs cependant retournerent joïeusement dans leur Païs, où étant arrivez, [324] ils firent à toute la Nation Gaspesienne un ample recit des merveilles qu'ils avoient vûës dans le Païs des Ames, & commanderent à tous les Sauvages, de la part de Papkootparout, de planter incessamment le bled d'Inde & le petun qu'ils avoient gagné en joüant avec luy à Leldestaganne. Les ordres qu'on leur signifioit de la part du Gouverneur des Ames, furent éxecutez fidelement ; & ils cultiverent avec succez le bled d'Inde & le petun l'espace de plusieurs années : mais la negligence de leurs ancêtres, disent-ils, les privent aujourd'hui de toutes ces commoditez, si utiles & si necessaires à toute la Nation.

On ne sçauroit exprimer quel fut l'étonnement & la [325] joie de ces Peuples, quand ils apprirent toutes ces merveilleuses rêveries, & que le pere avoit apporté dans un sac l'Ame de son fils, qui les instruiroit de toutes choses, dés le moment qu'elle seroit rentrée dans son corps. L'impatience extréme où étoient ces Gaspesiens, d'apprendre des nouvelles de l'autre Monde, les obligea de faire promtement une cabanne, de la même maniere que le Papkootparout l'avoit ordonné. Leurs esperances cependant furent vaines & inutiles ; car le pere aïant confié son sac aux soins d'une Sauvagesse, afin d'assister & danser plus librement aux festins publics qui se faisoient pour son heureux retour ; cette femme eut la curiosité de l'ouvrir, & l'Ame en sortit aussi- [326] tôt, & retourna d'où elle étoit venuë. Le pere en aïant appris la nouvelle, en mourut de chagrin, & suivit son fils au Païs des Ames, au grand regret de toute la Nation Gaspesienne : & voila justement ce qui fait croire à nos Sauvages l'immortalité des Ames.

De ces faux principes, appuïez sur une tradition aussi fabuleuse que celle-ci, ils ont tiré ces consequences extravagantes ; Que toutes les choses étoient animées, & que les ames n'étoient rien autre chose, que l'ame de ce qui étoit animé : Que l'ame raisonnable étoit une image sombre & noire de l'homme même : Qu'elle avoit des pieds, des mains, une bouche, une tête, & toutes les autres parties du [327] corps humain : Qu'elle avoit encore la même necessité de boire, de manger, de se vêtir, de chasser & pêcher, que lorsqu'elle étoit dans

le corps ; d'où vient que dans leurs regals & festins ils servoient toûjours la portion de ces ames, qui se promenoient, disoient-ils, aux environs des cabannes de leurs parens & de leurs amis. Qu'elles alloient à la chasse des ames de castors & d'orignaux, avec les ames de leurs raquettes, de leurs arcs, & de leurs fléches. Que les méchans, à leur arrivée au Païs des Ames, dansoient & voltigeoient avec une grande violence ; ne mangeant que de l'écorce de bois pourri, en punition de leur crime, jusqu'à un certain nombre d'années marqué par le Papkoot- [228] parou. Que les bons, au contraire, vivoient dans un lieu separé du bruit des méchans, dans un grand repos ; mangeant quand il leur plaisoit, & se divertissant à la chasse des castors & des orignaux, dont les esprits se laissoient prendre facilement : & voila le sujet pour lequel nos Gaspesiens ont toûjours observé inviolablement la coûtume d'enterrer avec les défunts, tout ce qui étoit à leur usage durant la vie.

## [329] CHAPITRE XIII.

*Des Superstitions des Gaspesiens.*

IL semble que les Peuples qui ont été les plus adonnez à l'Idolatrie, ont aussi été les plus superstitieux : d'où vient que les Romains, pour se distinguer de toutes les Nations du Monde par la Religion, aussi-bien que par leurs armes victorieuses & triomphantes, ont voulu retenir chez eux les Idoles de tous les Peuples qu'ils avoient vaincus, ausquelles ils rendoient leurs hommages & leurs adorations. Leur aveuglement même est parvenu jusqu'à ce point de superstition, que les [330] vaines observations de leurs Devins, sur le vol & sur le manger des oiseaux, ou dans les entrailles des animaux, gouvernoient entierement l'Empire Romain ; ne leur étant pas permis d'entreprendre, ou d'abandonner une affaire de consequence, sans consulter ces sortes d'Oracles, d'Augures & d'Haruspices, qui étoient à leur égard les Interpretes de la volonté des Dieux : maximes criminelles, & observations ridicules, qui sont encore aujourd'hui en vigueur chez nos Gaspesiens, qui observent, dans les fourberies de leurs Jongleurs, tout ce que les Romains reconnoissoient autrefois par le ministere de leurs Devins, de leurs vaines observations, & de leurs superstitions.

En effet, ils se persuadent [331] que certains Sauvages d'entre eux ont communication avec le Demon, duquel ils esperent d'apprendre ce qu'ils desirent, ou obtenir ce qu'ils demandent. Ils croïent que dans toutes leurs maladies il y a un Demon, ou un ver dans la partie affligée, que ces Barbares que nous appellons Jongleurs, ont le pouvoir de faire sortir, & de rendre la santé aux malades, par leurs insufflations, leurs chants, & les postures horribles qu'ils font dans leurs cabannes. Ils s'imaginent encore que leurs Jongleurs peuvent sçavoir de leur Demon, qu'ils appellent Oüahich, les meilleurs endroits de la chasse ; & que tous les songes de ces Imposteurs sont autant de revelations & de propheties, dont le succez [332] & l'évenement leur semble infaillible. Cette credulité d'un Peuple qui est extrémement susceptible de ces sotises, & de toutes sortes d'erreurs, a mis tellement ces Jongleurs en credit, que ces maîtres Fourbes passent pour les plus considerables de la Nation : en un mot,

celuy-là est le plus estimé, qui paroît avoir l'Oüahich le plus fort ; & qui se fait distinguer entre les autres, par des effets les plus extraordinaires & les plus infaillibles.

Plusieurs de nos François ont crû un peu trop facilement, que ces Jongleries n'étoient que des bagatelles, & un jeu d'enfant : qu'il n'étoit rien moins que ce qu'on disoit, de l'invocation qu'ils faisoient du Demon dans ces Jongle- [333] ries superstitieuses & criminelles. Je veux bien croire que dans quelques-unes, il n'y a bien souvent que de vaines observations ; & c'est aussi, peut-être, ce qui a donné lieu à quelques-uns d'inferer trop legerement de ces Jongleries particulieres & tout-à-fait pueriles, que les autres n'avoient rien de diabolique. Il est vrai que je n'y ai pû découvrir aucun pacte explicite, ou implicite, entre les Jongleurs & le Demon ; mais je ne puis me persuader aussi, que le Diable ne domine dans leurs tromperies, & les impostures dont il se sert pour amuser ces Peuples, & les éloigner d'autant plus de la connoissance du vrai Dieu : car enfin il est difficile de croire qu'un Jongleur fasse naturelle- [334] ment paroître les arbres tout en feu, qui brûlent visiblement sans se consumer ; & donne le coup de la mort à des Sauvages, fussent-ils éloignez de quarante à cinquante lieuës, lorsqu'il enfonce son coûteau ou son épée dans la terre, & qu'il en tire l'un ou l'autre tout plein de sang, disant qu'un tel est mort, qui effectivement meurt & expire, dans le même moment qu'il prononce la sentence de mort contre luy.

Il n'est pas encore naturel, qu'avec le petit arc dont ils se servent, & qu'un Jongleur me donna avec son sac de Jonglerie, ils blessent & tuent quelquefois les enfans dans le sein de leur mere, quand ils décochent leurs fléches dessus la simple figure de ces pe- [335] tit innocens, qu'ils craïonnent & marquent tout exprés, du mieux qu'ils peuvent, sur quelque morceau de peau de castor, ou d'orignac.

Jugez de-là, s'il ne faut pas avoüer qu'il y a dans ces effets extraordinaires, quelque chose de diabolique. Nos Gaspesiens cependant, font tant d'estime de leurs Jongleurs, qu'ils recherchent dans leurs incommoditez, ceux qui passent pour les plus fameux, (ainsi que parmi nous, les malades ont recours dans leurs maux, aux plus habiles Medecins :) ils se persuadent même que ces Fourbes peuvent sûrement guerir leurs maladies, & les soulager, en chassant le Demon, ou le ver qu'ils croient être renfermé dans la partie affligée. Ils appellent [336] & font entrer le Jongleur dans la cabanne du malade : ce Bouhinne s'informe éxactement de son mal ; & aprés luy avoir fait esperer qu'il luy donnera guerison, il demande & reçoit le present qu'il souhaite, étant en droit de choisir ce qu'il y a de plus considerable, de plus beau & de meilleur dans la cabanne du malade qui luy demande la guerison, le conjurant de la luy obtenir de son Ouhaïche, en luy disant ces paroles, *Emkadoui ;* comme s'il disoit, Prête-moi ton Demon. Le Jongleur luy répond : Si tu veux que je l'emploie à ton service, il faut que tu me fasse tels & tels presens. Il ne les a pas plûtôt reçûs, qu'il chante quelque chanson à la loüange du Oüahiche, & fait des [337] postures & des contorsions épouventables : il s'approche & se recule du malade ; il souffle par plusieurs reprises sur la partie infirme ; il plante & fiche un bâton bien avant dans la terre ; il y attache une corde, dans laquelle il passe la tête, comme s'il se vouloit étrangler : c'est-là où il fait des invocations, jusqu'à se mettre tout en eau & en écume ; faisant croire, par toutes ces infames & violentes contorsions, que le Diable est enfin venu, & qu'il

le tient même attaché, pour qu'il luy accorde la santé du malade. Il appelle ensuite & fait entrer les Sauvages dans la cabanne, ausquels il montre la corde, qui, dit-il, tient le Demon enchaînê : il en coupe un morceau, & le laisse ainsi échaper ; pro- [338] mettant que le malade guerira infailliblement. Un chacun luy en témoigne sa reconnoissance, par les presens ordinaires, & chantent tous d'un commun accord, quelque chanson à la loüange du Demon ; afin de le rendre propice & favorable, non-seulement au malade, mais encore à la Nation Gaspesienne.

Tout ce qui me paroît encore de plus étrange dans l'aveuglement surprenant de ces Peuples touchant leur Jonglerie, c'est qu'ils jonglent même les corps morts, comme s'ils étoient vivans ; tant ils sont persuadez que le Demon, ou le ver, qu'ils appellent du nom de *Tchougis*, ou de Malefice, est la cause de toutes leurs maladies, & qu'il reste encore quelque-tems dans le [339] corps du malade aprés sa mort : ce qu'ils firent assez connoître, par une action qui vous paroîtra sans doute bien cruelle, & tout-à-fait inhumaine.

Un des plus considerables de nos Gaspesiens étant tombé dangereusement malade, fit appeller le Bouhinne le plus expert, pour luy rendre la santé : mais aïant expiré au milieu du tintamare des invocations & des insufflations de ce Jongleur, toute la parenté s'assembla, pour assister aux funerailles de celuy qui avoit toûjours fait l'honneur de leur famille ; ils pleurerent ensemble son malheur, & firent les festins ordinaires des morts.

Le plus proche parent fit l'oraison funebre, avec un [340] long discours sur actions les plus glorieuses, que le défunt avoit faites en faveur de la Nation : il la commença d'un ton de voix fort moderé ; mais enfin, outré qu'il étoit, par le déplaisir sensible qu'il ressentoit de la mort de son ami, il parut tout à coup plein de rage & de fureur, & dit à ceux qui l'accompagnoient : Qu'il faloit necessairement se vanger du Demon, qui non content d'avoir fait mourir le plus brave & le plus genereux de tous les Gaspesiens, étoit encore resté dans le cœur du défunt, pour l'empêcher de revivre, & le tourmenter aprés sa mort, comme il l'avoit persecuté cruellement durant sa vie. On le crut ; & tous d'un commun consentement, descendirent le cadavre, [341] qui étoit exposé sur une espece d'échafaut qu'ils avoient fait dans la cabanne. Ils luy ouvrirent le ventre : & le Jongleur prenant le cœur entre ses mains, aprés l'avoir arraché, par un mouvement d'indignation contre le Tchougis, le découpa en autant de morceaux qu'ils étoient de personnes ; & les aïant distribuez à toute l'assemblée, ils en mangerent chacun leur part, pour, disoient-ils, se vanger du Demon, qui étoit dans le cœur du défunt. Cette action, barbare & cruelle, ne s'est faite qu'à quatre à cinq lieuës de l'endroit où j'étois ; & je l'ai sçû de ceux-mêmes qui avoient assisté à cet horrible festin, où la colere & la rage firent paroître tout ce [342] qu'on se peut imaginer de plus inhumain.

Nos Gaspesiens sont tellement adonnez à leur Jonglerie, qu'on peut dire que ce vice leur est naturel & hereditaire : c'est pourquoy, quand on les en veut tirer, ce qui ne se fait qu'avec bien de la peine, ils ont assez de malice pour dire aux Missionnaires, Qu'ils n'ont pas d'esprit, de trouver mauvais de ce qu'ils soufflent leurs malades ; puisqu'ils font eux-mêmes des insufflations, lorsqu'ils baptisent les enfans : & que si les Patriarches ont l'intention de chasser le Diable ou le peché, par leurs souffles & par leurs exorcismes ; les Sauvages n'ont point aussi d'autre dessein, que de chasser le ver, ou le Demon, du corps du malade.

[343] Vous remarquerez que chaque Jongler a son sac particulier, où sont toutes les piéces dont il se sert dans sa Jonglerie : les uns ont la figure de leur Oüahich, sous la forme d'un Quinquajou ; les autres, sous celle de quelque monstre, ou d'un homme sans tête. Il m'est tombé entre les mains un de ces sacs, qu'un Jongleur me donna, pour me témoigner qu'il vouloit prier Dieu, & se faire instruire. Je le reçûs avec d'autant plus de joie, qu'il y avoit déja long-tems que je souhaitois de gagner cette ame à Dieu, en luy faisant quitter ses erreurs, pour suivre les veritez du Christianisme. Il me le remit entre les mains, avec resolution de se faire Chrêtien, en me donnant avis, que [344] si je le conservois pour l'envoïer en France, & luy faire changer de Païs, je ne vivrois pas davantage que quatre à cinq jours ; & que si je le jettois au feu, je devois apprehender que la maison ne fût aussi-tôt reduite en cendres, à cause des effets extraordinaires que son Oüahich causeroit, lorsqu'il se verroit dans les flâmes.

Il est bon de ménager les Sauvages, & de differer quelquefois à les instruire, jusqu'à ce qu'ils aïent levé l'obstacle qui s'oppose à leur conversion : cela leur donne plus d'estime & de veneration pour le Christianisme, qu'ils croient alors ne pouvoir compatir avec leurs erreurs. Celuy-ci m'avoit témoigné plusieurs fois, qu'il vouloit se faire baptiser ; [345] afin d'entrer avec les autres dans la cabanne de Jesus, pour prier le Dieu du Soleil. Je sçavois cependant qu'il étoit un des plus fameux Jongleurs de toute la Nation ; ce qui m'obligeoit de le traiter assez indifferemment, toutes les fois qu'il me parloit de se faire instruire. Il connut bien que toutes ses poursuites seroient inutiles, s'il ne changeoit pas de conduite, & s'il ne renonçoit pour jamais à son Oüahich. Je luy dis que toutes les promesses qu'il m'avoit faites jusqu'alors, avoient été sans effet ; & que si son cœur parloit tout de bon, il m'en devoit donner des marques plus sinceres, que par le passé. Ah ! me dit-il ; tu crois donc que je te veux tromper toûjours, comme j'ai fait jus- [346] qu'à present ? Tu te trompes toi-même : & pour te persuader efficacement que je suis dans une veritable disposition de quitter mes erreurs, & de venir à la Priere ; tiens, me dit-il, voila mon sac de Jonglerie que je remets entre tes mains, pour ne m'en plus jamais servir.

Voici l'inventaire de ce que je trouvai dans ce petit sac à Diable, qui étoit fait de la peau d'une tête entiere d'orignac, à la reserve des oreilles, qui en étoient ôtées.

Il y avoit premierement le Oüahich de ce Jongleur, qui étoit une pierre de la grosseur d'une noix, envelopée dans une boëte qu'il appelloit la maison de son Demon. Un morceau d'écorce, sur laquelle étoit une figure assez hi- [347] deuse, faite avec de la pourcelaine noire & blanche, qui representoit quelque monstre, qu'on ne put pas bien distinguer, n'étant ni la representation d'un homme, ni d'aucun animal ; mais la forme d'un petit Quinquajou, qui étoit ornée de rassade noire & blanche : celuy-là, disent les Jongleurs, est le maître Diable, ou Oüahich. Il y avoit de plus, un petit arc d'un pied de longueur, avec une corde de deux brasses, entrelassée de porc-épi : c'est de cet arc fatal dont ils se servent, pour faire mourir les petits enfans dans le sein de leur mere. Je me suis servi de la corde, pour en faire une ligne à pêcher la truite ; & j'en ai pris plus de deux cens, en trois heures de tems, dans un lieu où elles [348] étoient en tres-grande abondante. Cela surprit un peu nos Sauvages, de voir que je faisois si peu d'état d'une chose que leurs Jongleurs estiment tant.

Outre cela, ce sac contenoit encore un morceau d'écorce, envelopé d'une peau delicate & bien mince, où étoient representez des petits enfans, des oiseaux, des ours, des castors & des orignaux ; sur lesquels le Jongleur darde sa fléche à sa volonté, avec son petit arc, pour faire mourir des enfans, ou quelque autre chose, dont la figure est representée sur ce morceau d'écorce. Enfin, j'y trouvai un bâton d'un grand pied de long, garni de porc-épi blanc & rouge, au bout duquel étoient attachées plusieurs courroies [349] de la longueur d'un demipied, & deux douzaines d'ergots d'orignac : c'est avec ce bâton qu'il fait un bruit de Demon, se servant de ses ergots comme de sonnettes, qui semblent plus propres à divertir les petis enfans, qu'à jongler. En un mot, la derniere piece du sac fut un oiseau de bois, qu'ils portent avec eux lorsqu'ils vont à la chasse, dans la pensée qu'il leur fera tuer du gibier en abondance.

Nôtre Sauvage Jongleur étoit cependant fort en peine, de ce qu'étoit devenu son sac, & quel usage j'en avois fait : il s'en voulut éclaircir, cinq à six semaines aprés me l'avoir donné ; & vint pour ce sujet a la cabanne où j'etois. Je luy dis, qu'il ne faloit plus [350] songer à son sac, qui avoit merité d'être jetté au feu, puisque c'étoit le partage du Diable, qui y avoit demeuré si long-tems ; & qu'il ne m'étoit arrivé aucun mal, non plus qu'à la maison, quoiqu'en me le donnant il m'eût menacé de quelque malheur. Se persuadant d'abord que je l'avois brûlé, Helas ! dit-il, je m'en suis bien apperçû, dans les voïages que j'ai fait depuis que je te l'ai donné : car j'ai eu faim, & j'ai été fatigué ; ce qui ne m'arrivoit jamais, quand j'avois mon sac. Je prenois mon Diable entre mes mains, & le pressois fortement contre mon estomac : Hé quoy donc, luy disois-je, souffriras-tu que je sois accablé de faim & de fatigue, toi qui ne m'as jamais delaissé ? Fais, [351] de grace, que j'aie dequoy manger : donnes-moi quelque soulagement dans les fatigues & dans la necessité qui m'accablent. Il écoutoit ma priere, & éxauçoit promtement mes vœux. Je luy fis cependant avoüer, en luy montrant son Oüahich, que c'étoit encore un reste de ses rêveries, & de ses sotes imaginations ; luy marquant plusieurs rencontres où il avoit beaucoup souffert, sans qu'il eût reçû aucun secours du Demon, dont la vertu étoit si foible, qu'il n'avoit pas le pouvoir de s'aider, ni de se soulager luy-même dans l'excez de ses souffrances.

Quelques-uns de ces Jongleurs se mêlent aussi de prédire les choses futures ; ensorte que si leurs prédictions [352] se trouvent veritables, comme il arrive quelquefois par hazard, les voila en credit & en reputation : si au contraire elles se trouvent fausses, comme c'est l'ordinaire, ils en sont quittes pour dire que leur Demon est fâché contre toute la Nation. C'est une chose assez surprenante, que cette impertinente excuse, bien loin de les décrediter, leur procure des presens considerables qu'on leur fait, pour appaiser la colere de ce Demon, qui par le ministere de ces Jongleurs, abuse ces Peuples, & se joüe aisément de leur simplicité.

Nos pauvres Gaspesiens étoient autrefois tourmentez du Diable, qui souvent les batoit tres cruellement, & même les épouventoit par des [353] spectres hideux, & des phantômes horribles ; jusques-là, qu'on a vû autrefois d'effroïables carcasses tomber au milieu de leurs cabannes, lesquelles causoient tant de terreur aux Sauvages, que quelquefois ils en tomboient morts sur la place.

Comme dans les occasions qui font perdre courage aux plus hardis, il se rencontre toûjours quelque déterminé, il arriva en celle-ci, qu'un de nos Sauvages, se proposa de vanger luy seul les outrages que les Demons faisoient

à toutes les cabannes de la Nation ; il prit en effet le dessein de tuer celuy qui les avoit tourmenté cruellement depuis si long-tems : il assûra même aux Sauvages, qu'il ne doutoit aucunement du suc- [354] cez de son entreprise, & qu'ils n'avoient qu'à se réjoüir ; parce, disoit-il, qu'il sçavoit précisément l'endroit par lequel il venoit chez eux : c'étoit un petit ruisseau entre deux rochers, où il ne manqua pas de se camper avec son fuzil entre ses bras. Un de nos François l'aïant trouvé en cette posture, luy demanda ce qu'il faisoit, & qui il attendoit. Qui j'attens ? répondit-il fierement ; j'attens le Diable pour le tuer, luy arrracher le cœur du ventre, & ensuite luy enlever la chevelure, en punition & en vengeance des outrages & des insultes qu'il nous a faits jusqu'à present : il y a trop long-tems qu'il nous tourmente ; & c'est aujourd'hui que je veux délivrer tous les Gaspesiens de [355] ces malheurs : qu'il vienne, qu'il paroisse, je l'attens de pied ferme.

Il est constant que depuis qu'ils son instruits de nos sacrez Misteres, particulierement ceux que nous avons baptisez, ne sont plus batus, ni tourmentez du Demon, de la maniere qu'ils l'étoient auparavant qu'ils eussent reçû le premier & le plus necessaire de nos Sacremens.

Si ces Peuples, comme vous venez de voir, sont si arrêtez à leurs Jongleries, ils n'observent pas avec moins d'éxactitude certaines coûtumes ridicules & superstitieuses ; sçavoir, que les jeunes gens non mariez ne mangent jamais de porc-épi rôti, se persuadant qu'ils ne marcheroient non plus que cet animal, qui [356] va tres-lentement : il leur est cependant permis de le manger boüilli, sans aucun risque.

Les petits fans d'ours, d'orignac, de loutres, de castors, & de porc-épis qui sont encore dans le ventre de leur mere, est le morceau délicat qui est reservé pour les anciens, n'étant pas permis aux jeunes gens d'y goûter ; parce qu'ils auroient, disent-ils, bien mal aux pieds quand ils iroient à la chasse. Parce même raisonnement, il leur est aussi défendu de manger des entrailles de l'ours, de la moëlle, ou de quelques autres morceaux delicats, ces mets frians étant uniquement reservez pour les vieillards.

Les os du castor ne se donnent pas aux chiens, d'autant [357] qu'ils perdroient, selon leur opinion le sentiment de la chasse du castor. On ne les jette point non plus dans les rivieres, par ce que les Sauvages apprehendent que l'esprit des os de cet animal n'en portent bien-tôt la nouvelle aux autes castors, qui deserteroient le Païs, pour éviter le même malheur.

Ils ne brûlent jamais encore les os du faon de l'orignac, ni la carcasse des martes : & ils se donnent bien de garde aussi de les donner aux chiens ; parce qu'ils ne pourroient plus prendre aucuns de ces animaux à la chasse, si les esprits des martes & des faons d'orignac disoient à leurs semblables, le mauvais traitement qu'ils auroient reçû chez les Sauvages.

[358] S'ils prennent quelques castors à la trappe, la coûtume veut qu'il soit ouvert en public, & que la viande demeure deux jours sur les perches à la fumée, avant que de la mettre à la chaudiere. Il faut bien prendre garde que le boüillon ne tombe dans le feu, & conserver les os soigneusemen ; parce que le contraire est un presage de malheur, ou de quelque infortune sur toute la Nation.

Un Chef de la Nation jetta une fois en ma presence, le pied d'un hibou dans la chaudiere d'un festin solemnel, comme un pronostic assûré que son fils, qui l'avoit tué à l'âge de cinq ans, seroit un jour un grand chasseur, & le plus vaillant guerrier du Monde.

[359] Les jeunes gens ne mangent jamais le cœur de l'ours, crainte de souffler en marchant, & de manquer de courage dans les occasions. Si quelque chasseur a tué, ou pris à la trape quelqu'un de ces animaux, on se donne bien de garde de le faire entrer par la porte ordinaire de la cabanne : la coûtume veut, & la superstition ordonne, d'y faire une ouverture nouvelle, à droite ou à gauche ; parce que, disent-ils, les Sauvagesses ne meritent pas de passer par où l'ours entre dans la cabanne. Les filles & les femmes qui n'ont pas encore eu d'enfans, en sortent au moment que l'ours en approche ; & elles n'y reviennent jamais, qu'il ne soit tout mangé.

Nos Gaspesiens sont encore tellement credules aux rêves, [360] qu'ils donnent facilement dans tout ce que l'imagination, ou le Demon leur represente en dormant ; & c'est assez que de rêver chez eux, pour leur faire prendre des resolutions sur un même sujet, toutes contraires à celles qu'ils auront prises auparavant.

Ce qui est de plus surprenant, c'est qu'ils observent encore aujourd'hui certaines ceremonies dont ils ne connoissent point l'origine, ni ne donnent d'autres raisons, sinon que leurs ancêtres ont toûjours pratiqué la même chose. La premiere, c'est que les filles & les femmes se reputent immondes, lorsqu'elles souffrent les incommoditez ordinaires à leur sexe ; & alors il ne leur est pas permis de manger avec les autres : mais il faut qu'elles [361] aïens leur chaudiere à part, & qu'elles vivent en leur particulier. Il n'est pas permis aux filles, pendant ce tems-là, de manger du castor, & celles qui en mangent sont reputées méchantes ; se persuadant que le castor, disent-ils, qui a de l'esprit, ne se laisseroit plus prendre par les Sauvages, aprés avoir été mangé par leurs filles immondes. Les veuves ne mangent jamais de ce qui a été tué par les jeunes gens ; il faut que ce soit un homme marié, un vieillard, ou un considerable de la Nation, qui chasse ou pêche pour leur nourriture. Elles observent si scrupuleusement cette coûtume superstitieuse, qu'elles racontent encore aujourd'hui avec admiration, qu'une veuve Gaspe- [362] sienne se laissa mourir de faim, plûtôt que de manger de l'orignac ou du castor, qui étoient dans sa cabanne jusqu'à l'abondance ; parce qu'ils avoient été tuez par des jeunes gens, & qu'il n'étoit pas permis aux veuves d'en manger.

J'en ai vû une, dans les hivernemens que j'ai fait dans les bois avec nos Sauvages, qui demeura trois jours sans manger, avec autant de joie, que si elle eût fait la meilleure chere du monde. Je luy dis tout ce qu'il me fut possible, pour luy faire rompre son Carême ; c'est ainsi qu'ils appellent cette abstinence : mais ce fut en vain ; & je ne pûs jamais la resoudre à manger, quoiqu'il y eût de la viande abondamment dans sa caban- [363] ne : ses enfans mêmes murmurerent contre moi, de ce que je sollicitois leur mere à quitter la coûtume de leurs ancêtres ; me disant que les Sauvages avoient leur maniere de vivre, aussi-bien que les François ; que nous pouvions suivre nos maximes, sans vouloir les obliger à quitter les leurs. Cette femme me pria d'accompagner les Sauvages à la chasse du castor, à laquelle ils m'avoient invité, pour m'en donner le divertissement : & elle m'assûra qu'elle mangeroit volontiers de celuy que je tuërois, si j'avois assez d'adresse d'en surprendre quelqu'un ; parce qu'elle me consideroit comme leur pere, & comme un de leurs anciens. Je fus assez heureux d'en trouver deux, ausquels je cassai la [364] tête ; je les portai à sa cabanne, & je luy en fis present : elle les mangea tous les deux en son particulier, ne luy étant pas permis de manger avec les autres, ni aux autres de manger avec elle. Elles observent la même chose aprés leurs couches, pendant un mois ou deux, suivant

leur volonté : & pendant tout ce tems-là, c'est une espece d'infamie, & un méchant presage, si elles boivent dans la chaudiere, ou dans le plat d'écorce qui sont à leur usage, parce que, disent ces Barbares, on ne peut faire bonne chasse d'orignac, ni de castor, quand cela arrive.

Comme nos Sauvages s'apperçoivent qu'on rend beaucoup d'honneur aux Missionnaires, & qu'eux-mêmes les [365] ont qualifié, par respect & par reverence, du titre de Patriarche ; on a souvent vû de ces Barbares s'ingerer & affecter l'éxercice & les fonctions de Missionnaire, jusqu'à confesser comme nous, ceux de leur Nation. Quand donc ces sortes de gens veulent autoriser ce qu'ils disent, & s'ériger en Patriarches, il font acroire à nos Gaspesiens, qu'ils ont reçû quelque don particulier du Ciel : comme celuy de Kenibeki disoit, qu'il avoit reçû une image du Ciel ; ce n'étoit cependant qu'un portrait qu'on luy avoit donné, lorsqu'il étoit à la traite chez nos François.

Ce qui est surprenant, c'est que cette ambition de faire le Patriarche, ne domine pas seulement sur les hommes ; les [366] femmes mêmes s'en mêlent, lesquelles en usurpant la qualité & le nom de Religieuses, disent quelques prieres à leur mode, & affectent une maniere de vivre plus retenuë que celle du commun des Sauvages, qui se laissant ébloüir à l'éclat d'une fausse & ridicule devotion, les considerent comme des femmes extraordinaires, qu'ils croient converser, parler familierement, & communiquer avec le Soleil, qu'ils ont adoré tous comme leur Divinité. Nous en avions une fameuse il n'y a pas long-tems, qui par ses superstitions extravagantes, entretenoit celles de ces pauvres Sauvages. J'avois un desir extréme de la voir ; mais elle mourut dans les bois, sans le baptême, que j'avois dessein de [367] luy donner, si j'eusse été assez heureux de l'en rendre capable. Cette vieille, qui comptoit plus de cent quatorze ans depuis sa naissance, avoit, pour toutes ses devotions ridicules & superstitieuses, quelques grains de jaie, qui étoient les restes d'un chapelet défilé, qu'elle conservoit precieusement, ne les donnant qu'à ceux qui étoient de ses amis ; en leur protestant cependant, que le don qu'elle leur faisoit étoit venu originairement du Ciel, qui luy continuoit toûjours cette même faveur, autant de fois que pour adorer le Soleil, elle sortoit de sa cabanne, & luy rendoit ses hommages & ses adorations : Je n'ai pour lors, leur disoit-elle, qu'à presenter ma main & l'ouvrir, pour faire tomber du [368] Ciel ces grains misterieux, qui ont la vertu & la proprieté non-seulement de soulager les Sauvages dans leurs maladies & dans toutes leurs necessitez les plus pressantes ; mais encore de les preserver de la surprise, de la persecution, & de la fureur de leurs ennemis. On peut dire veritablement, que si quelqu'un de ce Peuple s'adonnoit tout de bon à la vertu, & qu'il prît soin d'instruire les autres, il feroit des prodiges parmi eux ; puisqu'ils croiroient aisément tout ce que diroit un homme de leur Nation. Cette fourberie donc, que ces grains de chapelet venoient du Ciel, étoit si bien reçûë de ceux qui se glorifioient d'en avoir quelques-uns, qu'ils les conservoient comme tout ce qu'ils avoient de plus cher au mon- [369] de ; & c'étoit les aigrir à outrance, que de les contredire dans une sotise, qui dans leur estime passoit pour quelque chose de divin & de sacré. Tel étoit le sentiment d'une Sauvagesse qui m'avoit demandé le Baptême, & que j'instruisois pour ce sujet pendant mon hivernement de Nipisiguit : elle avoit, comme parente de cette Patriarche, cinq grains de chapelet misterieux, qu'elle tenoit envelopez avec beaucoup de soin ; elle me les montra, en me voulant persuader que c'étoit un present que le Ciel avoit fait à cette pretenduë Religieuse. Ce trait de super-

stition, que j'apperçûs dans cette Catechumene, me fit prendre la resolution de differer son Baptême, luy faisant connoître [370] l'obstacle qu'elle y apportoit, par la fausse & fole creance qu'elle avoit touchant ces grains de chapelet, qui venoient de France ; & que si elle avoit autant d'empressement pour le Baptême, qu'elle l'avoit témoigné, elle ne m'en pouvoit donner de preuves plus évidentes, qu'en me les remettant entre les mains. Elle fut assez surprise de ce discours ; elle me promit neanmoins, quoique d'une maniere assez foible, qu'elle feroit tout ce que je souhaiterois en ce rencontre. Elle me les fit voir ; & les aïant entre mes mains, j'admirai la simplicité de cette creature. J'en cachai un ; & de cinq qu'elle m'avoit donné, je ne luy en rendis que quatre. Elle me demanda, bien embarrassée, [371] où étoit le cinquiéme ? J'affectai d'ignorer le nombre qu'elle m'en avoit donné, & je fis semblant de le chercher parmi les branches de sapin sur lesquelles j'étois pour lors assis. Cette Catechumene s'étant donc persuadée, aussi-bien que toute sa famille, que j'avois laissé tomber par mégarde ce grain misterieux, elle en fit elle-même, avec tous les autres une recherche, si éxacte, qu'il ne resta rien dans sa cabanne qui ne fût ôté plusieurs fois de sa place. J'avois assez de peine à garder le serieux, voïant tout ce plaisant remuë-ménage ; & peu s'en falut, que je n'éclatasse de rire, lorsqu'une vieille Sauvagesse considerant que toutes ces recherches étoient inutiles, commença à se plaindre [372] du peu de soin que j'avois eu de conserver une chose si precieuse ; elle me dit, les larmes aux yeux : Qu'elle avoit un regret mortel, d'une perte si considerable : qu'il étoit bien aisé de voir que ce grain étoit venu du Ciel ; puisqu'il avoit quitté si subitement leur cabanne, pour s'envoler dans le sein du Soleil, duquel il descendroit une seconde fois, quand la Patriarche feroit sa priere accoûtumée : que tout incredule que j'avois paru jusqu'alors, à tout ce que me disoient les Gaspesiens, de la sainteté de cette vieille, & de la conversation familiere qu'elle avoit tous les jours avec Dieu, elle m'en feroit cependant connoître la verité, lorsque nous irions au Printems, comme nous nous le propo- [373] sions, dans la cabanne de cette Patriarche, où je trouverois infailliblement le grain que j'avois perdu. Elle me reïtera la même chose pendant plusieurs jours, avec tant d'importunité, que j'admirois son extravagance & ses superstitions. Les raisons les plus convaincantes que je luy alleguois pour la détromper, furent inutiles ; car fermant l'oreille à tout ce que je pûs dire pour luy inspirer des sentimens plus justes, elle s'emportoit contre moi avec tant de colere & de violence, que je jugeai à propos de la détromper dans le moment, & de la convaincre de l'erreur où elle étoit : ce qui me fut bien facile, en luy montrant ce grain de chapelet, & l'abus surprenant dont elle étoit [374] coupable. Elle fut extrémement surprise, & m'avoüa franchement qu'elle n'avoit pas d'esprit. Chacun profita de mes instructions ; & nôtre Catechumene me donna d'un grand cœur les quatre autres, qu'elle conservoit precieusement, parmi tout ce qu'elle avoit de plus considerable. Quelques-uns de nos François, qui avoient été dans la cabanne de cette vieille Gaspesienne, m'assûrerent qu'elle avoit encore en singuliere veneration un Roi de cœur, le pied d'un verre, & une espece de medaille : qu'elle adoroit ces bagatelles avec tant de respect, qu'elle se prosternoit devant elles, comme devant ses Divinitez. Elle étoit de la Nation des Porte-Croix, selon qu'il étoit aisé [375] de voir par la sienne, qu'elle avoit placée dans l'endroit le plus honorable de sa cabanne ; l'aïant enjolivée de rassade, de pourcelaine, de matachias, & de porc-épi, dont le mélange agreable representoit plusieurs & differentes

figures de tout ce qui étoit à sa devotion. Elle la mettoit ordinairement entre elle & les François ; les obligeant de faire leurs Prieres devant sa Croix, pendant que de son côté elle faisoit les siennes, selon sa coûtume, devant son Roi de cœur & ses autres Divinitez, que les Sauvages enterrerent avec elle aprés sa mort, persuadez qu'ils étoient, qu'elle iroit faire la Patriarche dans l'autre Monde, & qu'elle n'auroit pas la destinée des autres hommes [376] mortels dans le Païs des Ames, qui dansent sans cesse à leur arrivée, & sont toujours dans un continuel mouvement ; mais qu'elle joüiroit d'un repos perpetuel, & d'une heureuse tranquillité.

Je n'aurois jamais fait, si je voulois vous rapporter ici tous les traits de superstition de ces Barbares : ce que j'en ai dit suffit, pour vous faire voir jusqu'où va l'abus & la simplicité de ce Peuple aveugle, qui a vêcu dans les tenebres du Christianisme, sans Loi, sans Foi, & sans Religion.

## [377] CHAPITRE XIV.

*Des Souverains & des Loix des Gaspesiens.*

IL est constant que les Loix ont fondé les Monarchies les plus florissantes du monde ; c'est pourquoy on les appelle avec justice l'ame des Republiques, des Roïaumes & des Empires de l'Univers, parce qu'ils ne subsistent qu'autant que les Peuples en observent inviolablement les Loix : aussi ne peut-on, s'il me semble, donner aujourd'hui de raison plus convaincante de la décadance de la Nation Gaspesienne, autrefois l'une des plus nombreuses & des plus florissantes du Canada, que le mé- [378] prix des Loix fondamentales que les Anciens avoient établies, mais que nos Sauvages n'ont observées et n'observent encore à present, qu'autant qu'il leur plaît ; étant veritable de dire, qu'ils n'ont ni Foi, ni Roi, ni Loix. L'on ne voit plus en effet parmi ces Peuples, des assemblées nombreuses en forme de Conseil, ni cette Domination souveraine des Chefs, des Anciens & des Capitaines, qui regloient les affaires civiles & criminelles, & decidoient en dernier ressort de la guerre & de la paix ; donnant les ordres qu'ils jugeoient absolument necessaires, & les faisant observer avec beaucoup de soûmission & de fidelité. Il n'y a plus que deux ou trois Sauvages, qui dans leur district [379] conservent encore, quoiqu'assez foiblement, une espece de puissance & d'autorité, si on peut dire qu'il s'en trouve parmi ces Peuples. Le plus considerable est suivi de quelques jeunes guerriers, et de plusieurs chasseurs, qui luy font toûjours escorte, & qui se rangent sous les armes, lorsque ce Souverain se veut faire distinguer dans quelque occasion ; mais enfin, tout son-pouvoir & son autorité est bornée sous le bon plaisir de ceux de sa Nation, qui n'éxecutent ses ordres, qu'autant qu'il leur plaît. Nous avions parmi nous, à la Riviere de Saint Joseph, un de ces anciens Capitaines, que nos Gaspesiens consideroient comme leur Chef & leur Souverain, plûtôt par rapport à sa [380] famille, qui étoit fort nombreuse, qu'à la puissance Souveraine, dont ils ont secoüé le joug, & qu'ils ne veulent plus reconnoître.

L'occupation de ce Capitaine étoit de regler les lieux de chasse, de prendre

les pelleteries des Sauvages, en leur donnant ce dont ils avoient besoin. Celuy-ci se faisoit un point d'honneur, d'être toûjours le plus mal habillé, & d'avoir soin que tous ses gens fussent mieux couverts que luy : aïant pour maxime, à ce qu'il me dit un jour, qu'un Souverain, & un grand cœur comme le sien, devoit avoir plûtôt soin des autres, que de soi-même ; parce qu'étant bon chasseur comme il étoit, il auroit toûjours facilement tout ce qui luy seroit necessai- [381] re pour son usage ; & qu'au reste, s'il ne faisoit pas bonne chere, il trouveroit dans l'affection & dans le cœur de ses Sujets, ce qu'il souhaiteroit : comme s'il eût voulu dire, que ses tresors & ses richesses étoient dans le cœur & dans l'amitié de son Peuple.

Il arriva qu'un Etranger voulut disputer le droit de commander, ou du moins, partager avec ce Souverain cette Domination & cette Grandeur imaginaire, dont il faisoit autant d'estime, que du plus grand Empire du Monde. Ce concurrent arriva, bien équipé de haches, de fuzils, de couvertures, de castors, & de tout ce qui luy pouvoit donner quelque faste, & quelque entrée à la Souveraineté, qu'il [382] pretendoit luy être dûë legitimement par droit de succession hereditaire, à cause que son pere avoit été autrefois Chef & Capitaine de la Nation Gaspesienne. Hé bien, luy dit nôtre Sauvage, fais paroître que ton cœur est un veritable cœur de Capitaine, & digne de l'Empire absolu sur les Peuples que je gouverne : Voila, continua-t'il, quelques pauvres Sauvages qui sont tout nuds ; donne leur tes robes de loutre & de castor. Tu vois encore que je suis le plus mal habillé de tous, & c'est aussi par là que je veux paroître Capitaine ; en me dépoüillant, & en me privant de tout pour assister mes Sauvages : ainsi, lorsqu'à mon exemple tu seras aussi pauvre que moi, allons à la bonne-heure à la chasse ; [383] & celuy de nous deux, qui tuëra le plus d'orignaux & de castors, sera le Roi legitime de tous les Gaspesiens. Cet Etranger accepta genereusement ce défi : il donna tout ce qu'il avoit ; & ne se reservant rien, à l'imitation de nôtre Capitaine, que le necessaire, il alla à la chasse : mais il fut assez malheureux pour la faire tres-méchante, & par consequent obligé d'abandonner l'entreprise qu'il avoit formée de commander à nos Gaspesiens, qui ne voulurent pas reconnoître d'autre Chef, que leur ancien & brave Capitaine, auquel ils obeïssoient avec plaisir.

Les Gaspesiens n'ont aucunes Loix fondamentales, qui leur servent de regles à present ; ils vuident & terminent toutes [384] leurs querelles & leurs differens par amis, & par arbitres. S'il est cependant question de punir un criminel, qui ait tué ou assassiné quelque Sauvage, il est condamné à mort, sans autre forme de procez : Prens garde, mon frere, disent-ils, si tu tuës, tu seras tué : ce qui s'éxecute quelque-fois, par le commandement des Anciens, que s'assemblent au Conseil pour ce sujet, & souvent par l'autorité privée des particuliers, sans qu'on en fasse aucune recherche, pourvû qu'il soit évident que le criminel ait merité la mort.

Les prisons, les tortures, les roües, ni les gibets, ne sont pas en usage chez ces Peuples, comme en Europe : on se contente de casser la tête au coupable, à coups de hache, [385] ou de massuë. Les autres suplices sont reservez uniquement pour tourmenter & faire mourir les prisonniers de guerre.

C'est au Chef de la Nation, selon les Coûtumes du Païs, qui servent de Loix & de Regles aux Gaspesiens, de distribuer les endroits de la chasse à chaque particulier ; & il n'est pas permis à aucun Sauvage d'outre-passer les bornes & les limites du quartier qui luy aura été prescrit dans les Assemblées des Anciens,

qui se tiennent l'Automne & le Printems, expressément pour en faire le partage.

La jeunesse doit obeër ponctuellement aux ordres des Capitaines : quand il est question d'aller en guerre, il faut qu'ils se laissent conduire, qu'ils at- [386] taquent, & combatent la Nation qu'ils veulent détruire, de la maniere qu'il a été concerté par le Chef de leur Conseil de guerre.

Il n'est pas permis à aucun Sauvage d'épouser sa parente : & on ne voit pas chez nos Gaspesiens, de ces mariages incestueux du pere avec sa fille, du fils avec sa mere, de la sœur & du frere, de l'oncle ni de la niéce, ni même du cousin avec sa cousine. L'inceste est en horreur chez eux, & ils ont témoigné toûjours beaucoup d'aversion pour ce crime.

Celuy de nos Sauvages qui veut épouser une fille, doit demeurer une année toute entiere dans la cabanne du pere de sa maîtresse, auquel il doit servir, & donner toutes les [387] pelleteries des orignaux & castors qu'il tuë à la chasse. Par la même Loi, il est défendu aux époux futurs de s'abandonner à leur plaisir.

Aprés la mort de leur frere, il leur est permis d'en épouser la femme ; afin qu'elle ait des enfans du même sang, si elle n'en a pas eu de son premier époux.

Le pere de famille étant mort, si la veuve passe à de secondes nôces, il faut que l'aîné prenne le soin de ses freres & sœurs, & fasse cabanne à part ; afin d'éviter les mauvais traitemens de leur beau-pere, & ne point causer aucun trouble dans le ménage.

C'est au Chef & au Capitaine d'avoir soin des orphelins : ils sont obligez de les [388] distribuer dans les cabannes des meilleurs chasseurs ; afin qu'ils soient nourris & élevez, comme s'ils étoient leurs propres enfans.

Tous les Gaspesiens doivent indispensablement assister les malades ; & il faut que ceux qui ont de la viande ou du poisson en abondance, en donnent à ceux qui sont dans la necessité.

C'est un crime chez nos Sauvages, de n'être pas hospitalier : ils reçoivent charitablement dans leurs cabannes, les Etrangers qui ne sont pas de leurs ennemis.

Ils doivent avoir un grand soin des os des morts, & d'enterrer tout ce qui étoit à l'usage du défunt ; afin que les esprits de chaque chose, comme de ses raquettes, fuzils, ha- [389] ches, chaudieres, &c. luy rendent service dans le Païs des Ames.

Il est permis de rompre les mariages & les déclarer nuls, selon les Loix Gaspesiennes, quand ceux qui sont mariez n'ont plus d'amitié les uns pour les autres.

Il est honteux de se fâcher ou de s'impatienter, pour les injures qu'on peut dire, ou les disgraces qui arrivent aux Sauvages ; à moins que ce ne soit pour défendre l'honneur & la reputation des morts, qui ne peuvent, disent-ils, se vanger eux-mêmes, ni tirer raison des insultes & des affronts qu'on leur fait.

Il est défendu par les Loix & Coûtumes du Païs, de pardonner, ni de faire grace à aucun de leurs ennemis ; à moins [390] qu'on ne fasse pour eux de grands presens à toute la Nation, ou à ceux qui ont été offensez.

Les femmes n'ont aucun commandement parmi les Sauvages ; il faut qu'elles obeïssent indispensablement aux ordres de leurs maris : elles n'ont aucun droit dans les Conseils, ni dans les festins publics. Il en est de-même des jeunes gens qui n'ont point encore tué d'orignaux, dont la mort ouvre la porte aux honneurs

de la Nation Gaspesienne, & donne à la jeunesse le droit d'assister aux assemblées publiques & particulieres. On est toûjours jeune homme, c'est à dire on n'a pas plus de droit que les enfans, les femmes & les filles, à moins qu'on n'ait tué quelque orignac. En [391] un mot, on peut dire que toutes les superstitions que nous avons remarquées, passent pour autant de Loix chez ces Peuples. Ils en ont encore plusieurs autres, dont je ne parle pas ici, mais qu'on pourra voir dans le corps de cette Histoire.

## CHAPITRE XV.

*Des Mœurs des Gaspesiens.*

NOUS avons parlé dans les Chapitres precedens, de l'origine & de la naissance des Gaspesiens ; nous avons dit comment ils étoient vêtus, logez & nourris ; quelles étoient leur Langue, leur Religion, leurs Superstitions, les Chefs, les Souverains & les [392] Loix de ces Peuples : il est juste à present, pour contenter pleinement la curiosité du Lecteur, de luy faire ici un portrait naturel de leurs Mœurs en general, & un abregé des bonnes & mauvaises qualitez des Gaspesiens, soit du corps, soit de l'esprit.

Ils sont tous naturellement bien-faits de corps, d'une riche taille, haute, bien proportionnée & sans aucune difformité ; puissans, robustes, adroits, & d'une agilité surprenante, sur tout quand ils poursuivent les orignaux, dont la vîtesse ne cede point à celle des daims & des cerfs. Les hommes sont plus grands que les femmes, qui sont presque toutes petites ; mais les uns & les autres d'un maintien grave, serieux, & fort modeste ; mar- [393] chant posément, comme s'ils avoient toûjours quelque grosse affaire à ruminer, & à décider dans leur esprit. Leur couleur est brune, olivâtre & bazanée ; mais leurs dents sont extrémement blanches, peut-être à cause de la gomme de sapin, qu'ils mâchent fort souvent, & qui leur communique cette blancheur. Cette couleur cependant ne diminuë rien de la beauté naturelle des traits de leur visage : & on peut dire avec verité, qu'on voit dans la Gaspesie d'aussi beaux enfans, & des personnes aussi bien faites qu'en France ; entre lesquelles il n'y a pour l'ordinaire ni bossus, boiteux, borgnes, aveugles, ni manchots.

Ils joüissent d'une santé parfaite, n'étant pas sujets à une [394] infinité de maladies comme nous : ils ne sont ni trop gras, ni trop maigres ; & l'on ne voit pas chez les Gaspesiens, de ces gros ventres pleins d'humeurs & de graisse : aussi les noms de gouttes, de pierre, de gravelle, de galle, de colique, de rhumatisme, leur sont entierement inconnus.

Ils ont tous naturellement de l'esprit, & le sens commun au-delà de ce qu'on se persuade en France ; ils conduisent adroitement leurs desseins, & prennent des moïens justes & necessaires, pour y parvenir heureusement ; sont fort éloquens & persuasifs parmi ceux de leur Nation, usant de metaphores & de circonlocutions fort agreables dans leurs harangues, qui sont tres-éloquentes, particulierement quand [395] elles sont prononcées dans les Conseils & les Assemblées publiques & generales.

Si c'est un grand bien, que d'être délivré d'un grand mal, nos Gaspesiens se peuvent dire heureux ; parce qu'ils n'ont point d'avarice, ni d'ambition, qui sont les deux cruels boureaux, qui donnent la gêne & la torture à une infinité de personnes. Comme ils n'ont ni Police, ni Charge, ni Dignité, ni Commandement qui soit absolu, n'obeïssant, comme nous avons dit, à leurs Chefs & à leurs Capitaines, qu'autant qu'il leur plaît ; ils ne se mettent guere en peine d'amasser des richesses, ni de se faire une fortune plus considerable, que celle qu'ils possedent dans leurs bois. Ils sont assez contens, pourvû qu'ils [396] aient dequoy vivre, & qu'ils aient la reputation d'être bons guerriers & bons chasseurs, en quoy ils mettent toute leur gloire & leur ambition. Ils aiment naturellement leur repos, éloignant d'eux, autant qu'ils peuvent, tous les sujets de chagrin qui les pourroient troubler : d'où vient qu'ils ne contredisent jamais à personne, & qu'ils laissent agir chacun selon sa volonté ; jusques-là même, que les peres & les meres n'osent pas corriger leurs enfans, & les souffrent dans leurs desordres, de peur de les chagriner en les châtiant.

Jamais ils ne se querellent & ne se fâchent entr'eux, non pas à cause de l'inclination qu'ils ont à pratiquer la vertu ; mais pour leur propre satis- [397] faction, & dans la crainte, comme nous venons de dire, de troubler leur repos, dont ils sont tout à-fait idolatres.

En effet, s'il se trouve quelque antipathie naturelle entre le mari & la femme, ou s'ils ne peuvent vivre ensemble en parfaite intelligence, ils se separent tous les deux, pour chercher ailleurs la paix & l'union qu'ils ne peuvent avoir l'un avec l'autre : aussi ne peuvent ils comprendre comment on peut s'assujettir à l'indissolubilité du mariage. Ne vois-tu pas bien, vous diront-ils, que tu n'as pas d'ésprit ? ma femme ne s'accommode point de moi, & je ne m'accommode point d'elle ; elle s'acordera bien avec tel, qui ne s'accorde pas avec la sienne : pourquoy veux tu que nous soïons [398] quatre malheureux pour le reste de nos jours ? En un mot, ils ont pour maxime, que chacun est libre ; que l'on peut faire ce que l'on veut ; & que ce n'est pas avoir d'esprit, de contraindre les hommes. Il faut, disent-ils, vivre sans chagrin & sans inquietude, se contenter de ce que l'on a, & souffrir constament les disgraces de la Nature ; parce que le Soleil, ou celuy qui a tout fait & qui gouverne tout, l'ordonne ainsi. Si quelqu'un d'entr'eux pleure, s'afflige, ou se fâche, voici tout leur raisonnement pour le consoler : Dis-moi, mon frere, pleureras-tu toûjours ? seras-tu toûjours fâché ? ne viendras-tu plus jamais aux danses & aux festins des Gaspesiens ? mourras-tu, enfin, en pleurant, & [399] dans la colere où tu es à present ? Si celuy qui pleure & qui s'afflige, luy repond que non, & que dans quelques jours il reprendra sa belle humeur & sa douceur ordinaire : Hé mon frere, luy dira-t'on, tu n'as pas d'esprit : & puisque que tu n'es pas dans la volonté de pleurer, ni d'être toûjours fâché, pourquoy ne commences-tu pas dés à present à bannir toute l'amertume de ton cœur, & à te réjoüir avec ceux de ta Nation ? En voila assez pour rendre au plus affligé de nos Gaspesiens, son repos & sa tranquillité ordinaire. En un mot, ils font état de ne rien aimer, & de ne point s'attacher aux biens de la terre ; afin de ne point avoir de douleur, ni de tristesse quand ils les perdent. Ils sont, [400] pour l'ordinaire, toûjours joïeux, sans se mettre en peine qui païera leurs dettes.

Ils ont de la force, & beaucoup de constance pour souffrir genereusement les disgraces ordinaires, & communes à tous les hommes. Cette grandeur de courage éclate merveilleusement dans les fatigues de la guerre, de la chasse, &

de la pêche, dont ils supportent les travaux les plus rudes, avec une constance admirable. Ils ont de la patience, à faire confusion aux Chrêtiens, dans leurs maladies : qu'on crie, qu'on tempête, qu'on chante & qu'on danse dans la cabanne, il est bien rare que le malade s'en plaigne ; il se contente de ce qu'on luy donne, & prend sans repugnance ce qu'on luy presente, pour le [401] rétablir dans sa premiere santé. Ils souffrent encore patiemmẽt les châtimens les plus rigoureux, lorsqu'ils sont convaincus qu'ils les ont meritez, & qu'on a sujet d'être fâché contr'eux : ils font même des presens considerables à ceux qui les châtient severement de leurs desordres ; afin, disent-ils, de leur ôter du cœur toute l'amertume que leur cause le crime dont ils sont coupables ; alleguant toûjours pour leur excuse ordinaire, qu'ils n'avoient point d'esprit, quand ils ont fait telles & telles actions. Convaincus enfin de leur faute, on a beau les menacer de les roüer à coups de bâton, de leur percer le corps avec une épée, ou de leur casser la tête avec le fuzil ; ils se presentent eux-mêmes, pour [402] subir ces châtimens : Frapes-moi, disent-ils, & tuës moi si tu le veux : tu as raison d'être fâché ; & moi, j'ai tort de t'avoir offensé.

Il n'en est pas de-même cependant, quand on les maltraite sans sujet ; car pour lors tout est à apprehender : & comme ils sont extrémement vindicatifs envers les Etrangers, ils en conservent le ressentiment dans le cœur, jusqu'à ce qu'ils se soient entierement vangez de l'injure ou de l'affront qu'on leur aura fait mal à propos. Ils s'enyvreront même tout exprés, ou ils feront semblant d'être saouls d'eau-de-vie, pour éxecuter leur pernicieux dessein ; se persuadant qu'ils seront toûjours suffisamment justifiez du crime qu'ils auront commis, [403] quand ils diront aux Anciens & aux Chefs de la Nation, qu'ils étoient saouls ; & qu'ils n'avoient ni raison, ni jugement durant leur yvresse.

Ils ne sçavent, pour l'ordinaire, ce que c'est que de relâcher d'une entreprise qu'ils auront formée, principalement si elle est publique, & connnuë de leurs compatriots ; à cause qu'ils apprehendent d'encourir le reproche qu'on leur feroit, de n'avoir pas eu assez de cœur pour l'effectuer.

Ils sont tellement genereux & liberaux, les uns avec les autres, qu'ils semblent n'avoir aucune attache au peu qu'ils possedent ; s'en privant tres-volontiers & d'un grand cœur, dés le moment qu'ils connoissent que leurs amis en ont [404] besoin. Il est vrai que cette inclination genereuse souffre à present quelque alteration, depuis que les François, par le commerce qu'ils ont avec eux, les ont insensiblement accoûtumez à troquer, & à ne donner rien pour rien : car avant que la traite fût en usage parmi ces Peuples, c'étoit comme le siecle d'or, & tout étoit commun entr'eux.

L'hospitalité est en si grande estime chez nos Gaspesiens, qu'ils ne font presque point de distinction entre le Domestique & l'Etranger : ils logent également les François, & les Sauvages qui viennent de loin ; & ils distribuent de grand cœur, aux uns & aux autres, ce qu'ils ont pris à la chasse, ou à la pêche ; se mettant peu en peine qu'on demeure chez [405] eux des semaines, des mois, & même des années toutes entieres. Ils montrent toûjours bon visage à leurs hôtes, qu'ils considerent pour lors comme s'ils étoient de la cabanne, principalement si on entend tant soit peu la langue Gaspesienne. Vous leur verrez nourrir leurs parens, les enfans de leurs amis, des femmes veuves, des orphelins, & des vieillards ; sans jamais leur faire aucun reproche de la nourriture, ou des autres secours qu'ils leur donnent. Il faut assûrément avoüer que c'est-là une veritable marque d'un bon cœur, & d'une ame genereuse : aussi est-il vrai de

dire, que l'injure la plus sensible parmi eux, c'est de reprocher à un Sauvage, qu'il est Medousaoüek, c'est à dire qu'il [406] est avare. Voila pourquoy, quand on leur refuse quelque chose, ils disent fierement, Tu es un avare : ou bien, Tu aimes cela, aimes-le donc tant que tu voudras ; mais tu seras toûjours un avare, & un homme sans cœur.

Ils sont cependant ingrats envers les François, & ils ne leur donnent ordinairement rien pour rien. Leur ingratitude va même jusqu'à ce point, qu'aprés les avoir nourris & entretenus des choses necessaires à la vie, dans leurs besoins & leurs necessitez, ils vous demanderont le salaire du moindre service qu'ils vous rendront.

Ils aiment l'honneur, & ils sont bien-aises d'en recevoir, lorsqu'ils viennent en traite aux Habitations Françoises ; [407] & c'est aussi pour les contenter, qu'on tire quelquefois les fuzils, & même du canon à leur arrivée. Le Chef luy-même assemble tous les canots auprés du sien, & les range dans un bel ordre, avant que de descendre à terre, pour attendre le salut qu'on luy fait, & que tous les Sauvages rendent aux François, par la décharge de leurs fuzils. On admet quelquefois à table les Chefs & les Capitaines, pour montrer à tous les Sauvages de la Nation, qu'on les aime & qu'on les honore. On leur donne même assez souvent, quelque bel habit, pour les distinguer du commun, & dont ils font une estime particuliere, principalement s'il a été à l'usage du Commandant des François. [408] Ce fut peut-être pour cette raison, qu'un bon vieillard qui m'aimoit tendrement, ne vouloit jamais paroître en aucune ceremonie, soit publique, soit particuliere, qu'avec une calotte, une paire de gands brochez, & un chapelet que je luy avois donnez : il faisoit tant d'état de mon present, qu'il se croïoit quelque chose de plus grand qu'il n'étoit, quoiqu'il fût alors tout ce qu'il pouvoit être parmi son Peuple, dont il étoit encore le Chef & le Capitaine, à l'âge de plus de cent quinze ans. Ce bon homme se glorifioit, & se vantoit par tout, d'être mon frere, & disoit que nous étions tellement liez d'amitié l'un avec l'autre, que son cœur & le mien n'étoit plus qu'une même chose ; jusques-là mê- [409] me, qu'il vouloit me faire compagnie par tout où j'allois, peut-être autant pour profiter de ce que l'on me donnoit parmi les François, que pour contenter son amitié.

Les Gaspesiens, cependant, sont si sensibles aux affronts qu'on leur fait, qu'ils s'abandonnent quelquefois au desespoir, & attentent même sur leur vie ; se persuadant que l'insulte qu'on leur a faite, ternit l'honneur & la reputation qu'ils se sont acquis, soit à la guerre, soit à la chasse.

Tels furent les sentimens d'un jeune Sauvage, qui pour avoir reçû un coup de balet par mégarde, de la servante qui balaïoit la maison ; se persuada qu'il ne devoit plus survivre à cet affront imaginaire, [410] qui grossissoit dans son idée, à mesure qu'il y faisoit reflexion. Quoy, disoit-il en soi-même, avoir été chassé d'une maniere si honteuse, & en presence d'un si grand nombre de Sauvages mes compatriotes, & aprés cela paroître encore devant leurs yeux ? Ah, j'aime mieux mourir ! Quelle apparence de me trouver doresnavant dans les Assemblées publiques de ma Nation ? Et quelle estime aura-t'on de mon courage & de ma valeur, quand il sera question d'aller en guerre, aprés avoir été batu & chassé confusément par une Servante, de l'Habitation du Capitaine des François ? Il vaut mieux, encore un coup, que je meure. En effet il entra dans le bois, en chantant quelques chansons [411] lugubres, qui exprimoient l'amertume de son cœur : il prit & attacha à un arbre, la courroie qui

luy servoit de ceinture, & commença tout de bon à se pendre, & à s'étrangler. Il perdit bien-tôt le jugement, & même il eût perdu infailliblement la vie, si sa propre sœur ne se fût rencontrée par hazard, mais par un bonheur particulier, dans l'endroit même où son miserable frere s'étoit pendu. Elle coupa la corde promtement ; & aprés avoir pleuré comme mort, celuy en qui elle ne voïoit plus aucune marque de vie, elle vint annoncer cette funeste nouvelle aux Sauvages qui étoient chez Monsieur Denys. Ils allerent dans le bois, apporterent à l'Habitation ce malheureux Gaspesien, qui respiroit en- [412] core tant soit peu. Je luy desserrai les dents ; & luy aïant fait avaller quelques cueillerée d'eau-de-vie, il revint à luy : & peu de tems aprés, il recouvra sa premiere santé.

Son frere s'étoit autrefois pendu & étranglé tout-à fait, dans la Baye de Gaspé, à cause du refus qu'on luy fit, d'une fille qu'il aimoit tendrement, & qu'il recherchoit en mariage : car enfin, quoique nos Gaspesiens, comme nous avons dit, vivent joïeux & contens, & qu'ils éloignent avec application, autant qu'ils peuvent, tout ce qui peut les affliger ; cependant, plusieurs d'entr'eux tombent quelquefois dans une melancolie si noire & si profonde, qu'ils entrent tout d'un coup dans un cruel desespoir, & attentent [413] même sur leur vie.

Les femmes & les filles ne sont pas éxemtes, non plus que les hommes, de cette phrenesie, s'abandonnant entierement à la douleur & à la tristesse, causée par un déplaisir qu'elles auront reçû, ou par le souvenir de la mort de leurs parens, & de leurs amis : elles se pendent & s'étranglent, comme autrefois les femmes & les filles Millesiennes, que la seule apprehension d'être exposées toutes nuës dans les places publiques, selon la Loi que l'on fit exprés, empêcha de commettre de semblables cruautez. Rien cependant n'a encore été capable jusques-ici, d'arrêter la manie de nos Gaspesiennes, dont plusieurs finiroient miserablement leur vie, si dans le tems qu'on a connoissance [414] de leurs chagrins & de leur desespoir, par les chansons tristes & lugubres qu'elles chantent, & qu'elles font retentir dans les bois, d'une maniere tout-à-fait douloureuse, on ne les suivoit par tout, pour empêcher & prévenir les effets funestes de leur rage & de leur fureur. Il est cependant surprenant, de voir que ce chagrin & ce desespoir se dissipent presque dans un moment, & que ces Peuples, quelque affligez qu'ils paroissent, essuient tout à coup leurs larmes, arrêtent leurs soupirs, & reprennent leur premiere tranquillité ; protestant à tous ceux qui les accompagnent, qu'ils n'ont plus d'amertume dans le cœur : *Ndegouche*, disent-ils, *apche mou*, *adadaseou*, *apche mou oüahga-* [415] *hi*, *apche mou kedoukichtonebilchi*. Voila mon chagrin passé ; je t'assûre que je ne pleurerai plus, & que j'ai perdu le dessein de me pendre & de m'étrangler.

Ils sont doux, paisibles, traitables : aïant beaucoup de charité, d'amour & de tendresse les uns pour les autres : bons à leurs amis, cruels & impitoïables à leurs ennemis : errans & vagabons, industrieux cependant, & fort adroits à tout ce qu'ils entreprennent ; jusqu'à faire des fûts de fuzils, aussi bien qu'on en peut faire en France. J'en ai vû quelques-uns qui avoient fait des serrures de bois, & les clefs de-même, sur le modele de celle qui servoit à fermer nôtre cassette, dans laquelle étoient renfermez les orne- [416] mens de la la Chapelle qui étoit à mon usage.

On peut dire, à la loüange & à la gloire de nos Gaspesiennes, qu'elles sont fort modestes, chastes & retenuës, au delà de ce qu'on peut s'imaginer ; & je peux dire, avec verité, que je me suis particulierement dévoüé à la Mission de la Gaspesie, à cause de l'inclination naturelle que les Gaspesiens ont pour

l'honnêteté. On n'entend pas dans leurs cabannes, aucunes paroles deshonnêtes, ni même de ces discours qu'on appelle à double entente. Jamais ils ne prennent devant le monde, aucune liberté, je ne dirai pas criminelle, mais même les plus indifferentes ; point de baisers, point de badinerie parmi les jeunes gens de diffe- [417] rent sexe : en un mot, tout se dit, & se fait dans leur cabanne, avec beaucoup de modestie & de reserve.

Il n'en est pas de nos Sauvagesses, comme de ces filles de quelques Nations de ce nouveau Monde, qui font gloire de se prostituer au premier venu, & que les peres & les meres presentent eux-mêmes aux Chasseurs & aux Guerriers les plus fameux & les plus considerables : toutes ces prostitutions honteuses sont en horreur & en abomition parmi nos Gaspesiens ; & on voit sans admiration des jeunes Sauvagesses assez chastes & pudiques, pour servir d'éxemple, & apprendre à celles de leur sexe, l'amour & l'estime qu'elles doivent avoir pour la pudeur & la chasteté. [418] J'en ai vû une, qui sollitée puissamment de se rendre aux poursuites & aux prieres d'un jeune Guerrier, qu'elle ne pouvoit aimer sans la perte de son honneur, qui luy étoit aussi-cher que sa vie ; & voulant en éviter les poursuites insolentes, se déroba de la cabanne de son pere, & s'en éloigna de plus de cinquante lieuës, avec une de ses compagnes, marchant sur les glaces & dans la neige, où elle aima mieux passer les nuits en plein Hiver, sur quelques branches de sapin, que de s'exposer à commettre un crime qu'elle detestoit infiniment dans son cœur. Le jeune Sauvage la chercha inutilement dans la compagnie des autres Sauvagesses, qui ne pouvant s'imaginer ce qu'étoit deve- [419] nuë leur compagne, apprehenderent qu'elle ne fût tombée dans quelque precipice, ou qu'elle n'eût attenté sur sa vie, dans le déplaisir & le chagrin qu'elle avoit, de se voir persecutée par la brutalité de son amant : tous les Sauvages cependant, furent agreablement surpris, quand cette fille parut quelque-tems aprés, à la cabanne de son pere, auquel elle fit le recit du sujet & de la cause de son absence.

Je ne pretens pas cependant conclure, par tout ce que je viens de dire, que la chasteté ait un empire absolu sur tous les cœurs de nos Gaspesiennes ; puisqu'on voit chez elles quelques filles & des femmes libertines, qui vivent sans honneur : mais enfin, il est vrai que la boisson d'eau-de- [420] vie & l'yvrognerie, causent ces déreglemens, selon le proverbe, *In vino Venus ;* puisque celles qui n'en boivent pas font si jalouses de leur honneur, que non-seulement elles ne s'abandonnent pas au mal ; mais au contraire, elles vont même jusques à défaire & rendre tout confus, par leur forte & genereuse resistance, ceux qui ont l'insolence & la temerité de les solliciter à la moindre action criminelle, qui peut les écarter de leur devoir.

Ils sont naturellement volages, moqueurs, médisans, & dissimulez : ils ne sont fideles à leurs paroles, qu'autant qu'ils sont retenus ou par la crainte, ou par l'esperance ; & ils croiroient qu'on n'auroit pas d'esprit, d'être fi- [421] dele contre son interêt.

Leurs juremens se font comme ceux des Romains ; ils jurent par le Soleil, qu'ils ont adoré comme leur Divinité ; par leurs enfans, par leurs peres, & par tout ce qu'ils estiment de plus cher & de plus considerable : comme les Romains, qui juroient autrefois par Jupiter, par Cesar, & par les Dieux immortels. Il est vrai que nos Gaspesiens mettent quelquefois les doigts en croix, en invoquant le saint Nom de Jesus, quand ils jurent pour quelque chose de la derniere consequence : il y en a même quelques-uns qui jurent & blasphement le saint

Nom de Dieu comme les François, qui servent, par leurs mauvais éxemples, de pierres de scandale à ces Peuples, [422] par les blasphémes éxecrables qu'ils vomissent contre celuy que les Anges adorent dans le Ciel, & que les Demons reverent dans les abîmes de l'Enfer.

Jamais on n'a pû mieux appliquer qu'à nos Gaspesiens, les paroles du Distique, *Rustica progenies nescit habere modum ;* parce qu'en effet ils ne sçavent ce que c'est de civilité, ni de bien-seance. Comme ils s'estiment tous égaux, aussi grands, aussi riches, aussi puissans les uns que les autres, ils se moquent ouvertement de nos reverences, de nos complimens, & de nos accolades : ils n'ôtent jamais leur bonnet, quand ils entrent dans nos Habitations, cette ceremonie leur paroît trop embarrassante ; ils jettent leurs presens par [423] terre, au pied de celuy auquel ils les veulent donner, & fument une pipe de tabac, auparavant que de parler : Tiens, disent-ils, prens le present que je te donne de tout mon cœur. Voila l'unique compliment qu'ils font en ce rencontre : & cependant tout est civil chez eux ; car tout ce qui donne du contentement aux sens, passe pour honnête.

Ils sont sales & vilains dans leurs cabannes, dont les avenuës sont remplies d'ordures, de plumes, de copeaux, de raclures de peaux, & assez souvent des entrailles des animaux ou des poissons qu'ils prennent, à la chasse, ou à la pêche : dans leur manger, ils ne lavent que superficiellement la viande avant que de la mettre au feu, & n'écurent [424] jamais la chaudiere, que la premiere fois qu'ils s'en servent : leurs habits sont tous crasseux par le dehors & par le dedans, & remplis d'huile & de graisse, dont la puanteur fait souvent mal au cœur. Ils cherchent la vermine devant tout le monde, sans se détourner tant soit peu : ils la font marcher par divertissement sur leurs mains ; & ils la mangent, comme si c'étoit quelque chose de bon. Ils trouvent l'usage de nos mouchoirs ridicule ; ils se moquent de nous, & disent que c'est mettre des ordures dans sa poche. Enfin, quelque calme qu'il fasse au dehors de la cabanne, il y regne toûjours un vent du ponant tres-incommode, que ces Sauvages lâchent fort librement, sur tout lors- [425] qu'ils ont mangé beaucoup d'orignac, duquel on peut dire, *Corruptio optimi pessima.*

L'opposition est grande au Christianisme, du côté de leur indifference, de leur insensibilité, & des autres défauts que nous avons remarquez : mais elle ne l'est pas moins aussi du côté de l'yvrognerie, qui est le vice prédominant de nos Gaspesiens ; & je peux dire même, avec verité, que c'est un des plus puissans obstacles à la conversion de ces Peuples.

Ces Barbares, qui prenoient autrefois le vin pour du sang, l'eau de vie pour du poison, & qui fuïoient avec horreur les François qui leur presentoient ces liqueurs, sont aujourd'hui si passionnez pour ces sortes de boissons, qu'ils [426] se font un principe d'honneur, de se saouler comme des bêtes, & ne boivent, à proprement parler, que pour s'enyvrer : ce qui oblige les Missionnaires de regarder avec douleur la traite immoderée de l'eau-de-vie dans le Canada, comme l'un des obstacles le plus pernicieux que le Demon pouvoit susciter, au salut des François, & à l'établissement de la Foi parmi ces Nations infideles & barbares ; attendu que tous les vices & les crimes qui se trouvent ordinairement separez les uns des autres, se reünissent dans la seule traite d'eau-de-vie, lorsqu'elle se fait sans regle & sans moderation.

L'avarice, l'interêt, & la cupidité déreglée d'amasser des richesses que le Fils de Dieu a [427] condamnées, par le choix qu'il a fait de la pauvreté

Evangelique, est la source malheureusemẽt feconde, des desordres surprenans que commettent ceux qui commercent & qui traitent de l'eau-de-vie aux Sauvages : car vous remarquerez, s'il vous plaît, qu'ils les enyvrent tout exprés ; afin que ces pauvres Barbares étant privez de l'usage de raison, ils les puissent tromper plus facilement, & avoir presque pour rien leurs pelleteries, qu'ils ne leur donneroient que pour un prix juste & raisonnable, s'ils étoient dans leur bon sens. Ce commerce est frauduleux, & oblige à restitution, au *prorata* de ce que la chose peut valoir, selon les formalitez de la traite ; ces Barbares n'aïant pas dans leur yvresse la liberté, [428] ni le jugement qu'il faut pour conclure un marché de vente ou d'achat, qui demande un consentement libre & mutuel de part & d'autre.

Comme il n'est pas permis de vendre de l'eau pour du vin, ou pour de l'eau-de-vie, selon qu'il arrive assez souvent, par le mélange de ces liqueurs dans la vente & la distribution de ces sortes de boissons : c'est aussi le second déreglement dont sont coupables nos Traiteurs d'eau-de-vie, qui colorent cette injustice du titre de charité ; alleguant pour raisons, qu'ils font cette mixtion afin de ne pas enyvrer les Sauvages. Il est vrai qu'ils seroient en quelque maniere excusables, s'ils les récompensoient par d'autres marchandises : mais on sçait bien qu'ils n'en font [429] rien du tout ; qu'ils retirent le même profit, que s'ils vendoient loïalement, & qu'ils les enyvrent encore par ces liqueurs mixtionnées ; se rendant ainsi, par ce malheureux commerce, les maîtres non-seulement des pelleteries des Sauvages, mais même des couvertures, fuzils, haches, chaudieres, &c., qu'ils leur auront vendu bien cherement : en sorte que ces pauvres Barbares se voïent tout nuds, & dépoüillez des pelleteries & des marchandises qu'ils avoient apportées, & traitées pour leur usage, & pour l'entretien de leur famille.

L'impureté, les adulteres, les incestes, & plusieurs autres crimes que la pudeur m'empêche de nommer, sont les déreglemens ordinaires qui se [430] commettent par la traite d'eau-de-vie, de laquelle plusieurs Traiteurs se servent pour abuser des Sauvagesses, qui s'abandonnent facilement durant leur yvresse, à toute sorte d'impudicité ; quoique d'ailleurs, comme nous avons dit, elles donneroient plûtôt un soufflet, qu'un baiser, à quiconque les voudroit porter au mal, si elles étoient presentes à elles-mêmes.

Les injures, les querelles, les homicides, les meurtres & les parricides, sont encore aujourd'hui les suites funestes de la traite d'eau-de-vie : & on voit avec douleur, des Sauvages mourir dans leur yvresse, s'étrangler eux-mêmes ; le frere, couper la gorge à sa sœur ; le mari, casser la tête à sa femme ; une mere, [431] jetter son enfant dans le feu, ou dans la riviere ; & le pere, étoufer cruellement des petits innocens, qu'ils cherissent & qu'ils aiment autant, ou plus qu'eux-mêmes, quand ils ne sont pas privez de raison. C'est un jeu pour eux, d'aller tout rompre & briser dans les cabannes ; de crier à pleine tête, des heures toutes entieres, en repetant toûjours le même mot : ils se batent & se déchirent à belles-dents ; ce qui ne leur arrive jamais, ou du moins tres rarement, hors de la boisson. Les François mêmes ne sont pas éxemts de la fureur bachique de ces Barbares, qui par un effet de la colere de Dieu justement irrité contre une conduite si peu Chrêtienne, pillent, ravagent & brûlent quelquefois leurs maisons, [432] leur magazin, & en viennent assez souvent à des extrémitez plus fâcheuses.

J'abrege une infinité d'autres desordres de la traite immoderée qui se fait

à nos Sauvages, du vin, de l'eau-de-vie, & de toute autre boisson enyvrante, pour justifier le zele de Monseig^r l'Evêque de Quebec, des Recollets, & des autres Missionnaires, qui se sont hautement déclarez contre ces desordres ; avec d'autant plus de justice, qu'ils ont reconnu par une longue experience, qu'elle étoit la cause funeste de la perte des biens spirituels & temporels des François & des Sauvages de la Nouvelle France ; & que parmi un grand nombre d'obstacles, de superstition, d'insensibilité, d'aveu- [433] glement, d'indifference, d'impureté, qui s'opposent à la conversion de ces Nations Infideles, il y auroit toûjours bien moins d'apparence d'établir solidement un veritable Christianisme chez ces Peuples, aussi long-tems qu'on les saouleroit, & qu'on ne garderoit aucune regle, ni aucune moderation dans la distribution & le commerce de l'eau-de-vie. C'étoit aussi, peut-être, ce que vouloit me dire ce jeune libertin, qui ne se mettant aucunement en peine du salut des Sauvages, pourvû qu'il en eût les pelleteries, pour satisfaire à son ambition & à ses interêts, se vantoit qu'il feroit plus de mal avec une bouteille d'eau-de-vie, que les Missionnaires ne leur sçauroient faire de bien avec une [434] bouteille d'eau-benîte ; c'est à dire qu'il damneroit plus de Sauvages en les saoulant, que les Missionnaires n'en sauveroient en les instruisant des veritez du Christianisme.

Je ne veux pas m'arrêter ici, aux raisons que nos Traiteurs alleguent pour justifier l'injustice de leur procedé ; disant qu'il faudroit fermer les Cabarets en France : que ce n'est pas un peché de saouler un François, encore moins un Sauvage, en l'excitant même à boire ; quoique l'on sçache qu'ils ne prennent de l'eau-de-vie expressément que pour s'enyvrer, ces Barbares ne trouvant pas de plaisir dans cette boisson, qu'autant qu'elle leur fait perdre entierement le jugement & la raison : que ce seroit ruiner absolument le [435] commerce & le trafic de la Colonie, si on ne donnoit pas d'eau-de-vie aux Sauvages ; à cause que ces Barbares se retireroient chez les Anglois & les Hollandois, de la Nouvelle Angleterre, & de la Nouvelle Hollande : qu'enfin, il faudroit un Reglement de Police, & sur tout, point d'acceptation de personnes, ni de parens, ni d'amis ; mais que la traite fût accordée à tout le monde, pour en user avec moderation : afin que le profit du commerce ne fût pas, comme il avoit été autrefois, du côté de ceux ausquels on avoit accordé la traite, privativement à tout autre ; sous pretexte, disoit-on, qu'ils n'enyvroient pas les Sauvages, parmi lesquels cependant on voïoit beaucoup de desordres [436] & de déreglemens.

Il seroit fort aisé de répondre à toutes ces raisons ; mais comme la pluspart se détruisent d'elles-mêmes, je dirai seulement, qu'il seroit à souhaiter qu'on fit un Reglement de police, sous des peines rigoureuses, pour arrêter les desordres de cette malheureuse boisson : que la traite fût commune, sans acceptation de personne, afin d'éviter toute jalousie : & qu'enfin, chacun voulût bien relâcher quelque chose de ses interêts ; afin de faciliter la conversion de ces Peuples, & l'établissement du Christianisme parmi ces Barbares, en les habituant & humanisant avec nous, selon l'ancien projet des RR. PP. Recollets de la Province de Paris, qui ont l'honneur d'avoir [437] été les premiers Apôtres de ce nouveau Monde, comme je l'ai fait voir dans le premier établissement de la Foi dans la Nouvelle France.

## CHAPITRE XVI.

*Du Mariage des Gaspesiens.*

LES garçons, selon la coûtume ordinaire du Païs, ne sortent jamais de la cabanne de leur pere, que pour aller demeurer chez quelques-uns de leurs amis, où ils esperent de trouver une fille, pour se marier avec elle : ils n'ont pas plûtôt formé le dessein de l'épouser, qu'ils en font eux mêmes la proposition au pere de la Sauvagesse; parce qu'ils sçavent bien que la fille [438] n'approuvera jamais leur recherche, à moins qu'elle ne soit agreable à son pere, auquel il demande s'il juge à propos qu'il entre dans sa cabanne, c'est à dire dans son alliance, en épousant sa fille, pour laquelle il luy proteste avoir beaucoup d'inclination. Si le pere n'agrée pas la recherche du jeune Sauvage, il luy dit, sans autre compliment, que cela ne se peut faire : & cet amant, tout passionné qu'il puisse être, reçoit paisiblement cette réponse, comme l'arrêt decisif de son sort & de ses amours, & cherche ailleurs quelqu'autre maîtresse. Il n'en est pas de-même, si le pere trouve que le parti qui se presente soit avantageux pour sa fille : car pour lors, aprés avoir donné son agrément à [439] cet amant, il luy dit de parler à sa maîtresse, pour sçavoir sa volonté sur une affaire qui la regarde uniquement ; ne voulant pas, disent ces Barbares, violenter les inclinations de leurs enfans en fait de mariage, & les obliger d'épouser un homme qu'elles ne sçauroient se résoudre d'aimer, ni par force, ni par complaisance, ni par inclination. C'est ainsi que les peres & les meres de nos Gaspesiens, laissent une entiere liberté à leurs enfans, de se choisir le parti qu'ils jugent le plus convenable à leur humeur, & plus conforme à leurs amitiez ; quoique cependant les parens se reservent toûjours le droit de leur indiquer celuy qu'ils croient raisonnablement leur être plus avantageux : mais [440] enfin, il n'en est que ce que veulent ceux qui se doivent marier ; & ils sçavent fort bien dire, qu'ils ne se marient pas pour les autres, mais pour eux-mêmes.

Le garçon donc, aprés le consentement du pere, s'adresse à la fille, pour sonder ses inclinations : il luy fait un present, de tout ce qu'il peut avoir de considerable ; en sorte que si elle agrée se recherche, elle le reçoit, l'accepte avec plaisir, & luy offre reciproquement de ses plus beaux ouvrages ; n'aïant garde, disent-elles, de recevoir la moindre chose de ceux qui les recherchent en mariage, pour ne pas contracter aucun engagement avec un jeune homme qu'elles n'ont pas dessein d'épouser.

[441] Les presens reçûs & acceptez de part & d'autre, le Sauvage retourne chez luy, prend congé de ses parens, & vient demeurer une année toute entiere dans la cabanne du pere de sa maîtresse, auquel, selon les Loix du Païs, il doit servir, & donner toutes les pelleteries qu'il fait à la chasse ; à peu prés comme fit autrefois Jacob, qui servit son beau-pere Laban, avant que d'épouser Rachel. Il faut ensuite, qu'il se montre bon chasseur, & capable de nourrir une grosse famille ; qu'il se rende agreable, obeïssant, promt à faire tout ce qui regarde le bien & l'utilité de la cabanne, & adroit aux éxercices ordinaires de la Nation : afin de meriter l'estime de sa maîtresse, & luy faire connoître [442] qu'elle sera parfaitement bien-heureuse avec luy. La fille, de son côté, fait

aussi de son mieux ce qui est du ménage, & s'applique entierement durant cette année, si la recherche du garçon luy plaît, à faire des raquettes, coudre les canots, accommoder des écorces, passer les peaux d'orignaux & de castors, aller à la traîne, en un mot, faire tout ce qui luy peut donner la réputation d'être une bonne ménagere.

Comme ils sont tous également pauvres & riches, l'interêt ne preside jamais à leurs mariages ; aussi n'est-il pas question de doüaire, de possession, ni d'heritage, de contract, ni de Notaire, qui reglent les biens des deux parties en cas de divorce : c'est assez qu'ils [443] aïent une couverture, ou quelque robe de castor pour se mettre en ménage ; & tout ce que les plus riches peuvent esperer, c'est une chaudiere, un fuzil, un bate-feu, un coûteau, une hache, un canot, & quelques autres bagatelles, qui sont toutes les richesses de ces nouveaux mariez, lesquels ne laissent pas cependant de vivre contens, lorsque ce peu leur manque ; parce qu'ils esperent de trouver en chassant, dequoy avoir abondamment leur besoin & leur necessité.

Plusieurs se sont persuadez trop facilement, que le jeune homme abusoit de son épouse future, durant cette année qu'il est obligé de demeurer dans la cabanne de sa maîtresse ; car outre que c'est une [444] coûtume & une Loi inviolable chez nos Gaspesiens, qu'il n'est pas permis de transgresser, sans exposer toute la Nation à quelque malheur considerable, il est veritable de dire que ces deux amans vivent l'un avec l'autre comme frere & sœur, avec beaucoup de reserve ; n'aïant jamais appris, tout le tems que j'ai demeuré dans la Gaspesie, qu'il se soit passé quelque desordre entre eux : attendu même que les femmes & les filles, comme nous avons dit, sont assez modestes d'elles-mêmes, pour n'accorder en ce rencontre aucune liberté qui soit contraire à leur devoir.

Lors donc que deux parties symbolisent d'humeurs & d'inclinations, on convoque sur la fin de l'année, les plus an- [445] ciens de la Nation, les parens & les amis des époux futurs, au festin qui se doit faire, pour celebrer publiquement leur mariage. Le jeune homme est obligé d'aller à la provision ; & le regale est plus ou moins magnifique, qu'il fait une chasse, ou une pêche, plus ou moins avantageuse : on fait les harangues ordinaires, on chante, on danse, on se divertit ; & on donne, en presence de toute l'assemblée, la fille au garçon, pour sa femme, sans aucune autre ceremonie. S'il arrive pour lors, que l'humeur de l'un, soit incompatible avec le genie de l'autre, le garçon ou la fille se retire sans bruit ; & tout le monde est aussi content & satisfait, que si le mariage avoit reüssi : parce, disent-ils, qu'il ne faut pas se marier [446] pour être malheureux le reste de ses jours.

Il y a cependant beaucoup d'instabilité dans ces sortes d'alliances ; & les jeunes mariez changent assez facilement d'inclination, lorsqu'ils passent quelques années sans avoir d'enfans : car enfin, disent-ils, à leur femme, je ne me suis marié avec toi, que dans l'esperance de voir dans ma cabanne une famille nombreuse ; & puisque je ne peux avoir d'enfans avec toi, separons-nous, & cherchons ailleurs chacun nôtre avantage. En sorte que s'il se trouve quelque solidité dans les mariages de nos Gaspesiens, c'est seulement lorsque la femme donne à son mari des marques de sa fecondité ; & on peut dire avec verité, que les enfans sont pour [447] lors comme les liens indissolubles, & la confirmation du mariage de leurs pere & mere, qui se tiennent fidele compagnie, sans jamais se separer, & qui vivent en si grande union l'un avec l'autre, qu'ils semblent n'avoir plus qu'un même cœur, & qu'une même

volonté. Ils s'aiment cordialement, & s'accordent admirablement bien ; vous ne voïez point de querelles, d'inimitiez, ni de reproches parmi eux : les hommes laissent la disposition du ménage aux femmes, sans les inquiéter : elles coupent, elles tranchent, elles donnent comme il leur plaît, sans que le mari s'en fâche ; & je peux dire, que je n'ai jamais vû le Chef de la cabanne où je demeurois, demander à sa femme, ce que [448] devenoit la viande d'orignac & de castor, quoique tout ce qu'il en avoit amassé diminuât assez vîte. Je n'ai non plus jamais oüi les femmes se plaindre, de ce qu'on ne les invitoit pas aux festins, ni aux conseils ; que les hommes se divertissoient, & mangeoient les bons morceaux ; qu'elles travailloient incessament, allant querir le bois pour le chaufage, faisant les cabannes, passant les peaux, & s'occupant en d'autres travaux assez penibles, qui ne se font que par les femmes. Chacun fait son petit devoir doucement, paisiblement, & sans dispute : la multiplication des enfans ne les embarrasse pas ; tant plus ils en ont, tant plus sont-ils contens & satisfaits.

On ne peut exprimer la dou- [449] leur d'un Gaspesien, quand il perd sa femme. Il est vrai qu'au dehors il dissimule autant qu'il peut, l'amertume qu'il en a dans le cœur ; parce que ces Peuples estiment que c'est une marque de foiblesse, indigne d'un homme qui est tant soit peu brave & genereux, de pleurer en public. Si donc le mari verse quelquefois des larmes, c'est seulement pour montrer qu'il n'est pas insensible à la mort de sa femme, qu'il aimoit tendrement ; quoique dans son particulier il est vrai de dire, qu'il s'abandonne entierement à la melancolie, qui le fait mourir assez souvent, ou qui le porte jusques aux Nations les plus éloignées, pour y faire la guerre, & noïer dans le sang de ses ennemis, la tristesse & la douleur qui l'accable.

## [450] CHAPITRE XVII.

### *De la maniere dont les Gaspesiens font la guerre.*

SI nous recherchons les motifs & les sujets particuliers qui ont animé ces Peuples à la guerre, nous n'en trouverons pas d'autres, que le desir de vanger une injure qu'ils ont reçûë, ou plûtôt l'ambition de se faire craindre & redouter des Nations étrangeres : d'où vient qu'on a vû des Sauvages traverser de grands Païs, avec quelques poigneées de bled d'Inde pour toute provision ; coucher sur la neige, souffrir la faim & la soif, & s'exposer aux injures du tems, dans les [451] saisons les plus rigoureuses ; attendre des dix à quinze jours derriere un arbre, pour trouver l'occasion de surprendre, combatre, vaincre leurs ennemis, leur enlever la chevelure, & retourner au Païs chargez de ces cruelles dépoüilles : afin de marquer à toute la Nation, qu'ils ont assez de courage pour se vanger eux-seuls des insultes qu'on leur aura faites, lorsqu'elle ne se met pas en état d'entrer elle-même dans leur ressentiment.

L'interêt, ni le desir d'étendre les limites de leur Province, ne president jamais dans le Conseil de guerre, & ils n'attaquent pas leurs ennemis dans le dessein de s'emparer de leur Païs, ou de les assujettir aux Loix & aux Coûtumes de la [452] Gaspesie : ils sont trop contents, pourvû qu'ils puissent avoir l'avantage de dire, Nous avons vaincu telles & telles Nations ; nous nous sommes

vangez de nos ennemis ; & nous en avons enlevé une infinité de chevelures, aprés en avoir fait un grand carnage dans la chaleur du combat.

Quoique nos Gaspesiens joüissent des douceurs de la paix, & que je parle ici plûtôt de la guerre des anciens de cette Nation, que de ceux d'à present, qui semblent avoir entierement perdu cette humeur belliqueuse avec laquelle leurs ancêtres ont dompté autrefois, & triomphé glorieusement des Nations les plus nombreuses de la Nouvelle France ; ils conservent cepen- [453] dant encore un reste de cruauté, & un desir d'aller en guerre contre les anciens ennemis de la Nation, & particulierement contre les Sauvages situez au Nord de l'embouchûre du fleuve de Saint Laurent, qui redoutent nos Gaspesiens, comme les plus terribles & les plus cruels de leurs ennemis.

Nous appellons ces Barbares les petits Esкimaux, pour les distinguer des grands, qui demeurent à la Baye des Espagnols, où les Basques vont faire la pêche de Moruë, avec beaucoup de perils & de dangers, à cause de la guerre implacable qu'ils ont avec ces Sauvages.

La source & l'origine de cette guerre vient, de ce qu'un Matelot Basque ou Espagnol [454] s'etant égaré dans les bois, sans pouvoir se ranger à bord avant le départ des navires, qui le chercherent & l'attendirent inutilement, se vit obligé de rester dans les cabannes des Sauvages, qu'il rencontra heureusement, aprés beaucoup de peines & de fatigues. Ces Barbares firent tout ce qu'ils pûrent, pour le consoler de ses disgraces : ils luy donnerent même la fille du plus considerable de leurs Capitaines, laquelle il épousa, & vêcut paisiblement avec elle. Cette Sauvagesse avoit pour luy toute la complaisance imaginable, principalement depuis qu'elle se vid en état d'être bien-tôt la mere d'un enfant, qu'elle souhaitoit avec passion, pour engager son mari à l'aimer cordialement. [455] L'Hiver se passa fort agreablement ; les navires arriverent à l'ordinaire ; le Capitaine fut réjoüi de trouver son Matelot en parfaite santé, & d'apprendre la maniere obligeante dont les Sauvages en avoient agi à son égard : il fit à tous les Esкimaux un festin solemnel de reconnoissance ; & il n'y eut que ce miserable, qui fut non seulement insensible aux amitiez qu'il avoit reçûës de ces Peuples, mais qui prit même la resolution funeste de couper la gorge à sa femme, avant que de retourner en France. Animé de rage & de fureur, & dissimulant cependant le cruel dessein qu'il avoit conçû contre celle qui luy avoit sauvé la vie, il fit semblant de vouloir aller à la chasse, pour regaler [456] les François : à cet effet, il s'éloigne des navires, il s'écarte des cabannes, s'embarque en canot avec sa femme ; & étant arrivé dans un endroit où couloit un agreable ruisseau entre deux rochers, il y débarque avec elle, la querelle, la jette par terre, la tuë, l'assomme, & pour comble de sa cruauté, il luy ouvre le ventre avec son coûteau, pour voir si les enfans étoient conçûs & formez dans le sein des Sauvagesses, comme dans le sein des femmes de l'Europe. Il semble que la Nature luy reprocha tout aussi-tôt l'horreur de sa cruauté, & l'énormité de son attentat, en luy faisant voir le corps d'un petit enfant qui se plaignoit tacitement, de ce qu'il le faisoit mourir si cruellement, [457] aprés luy avoir donné la vie.

Je ne sçai pas si ce Matelot dénaturé, qui s'embarqua aprés une action si noire & si méchante, conçut tout le regret qu'il en devoit avoir dans le cœur ; mais je sçai bien que les Sauvages en furent si sensiblement outrez de douleur, qu'ils ont fait passer fur les Espagnols & sur les Basques, la vengeance qu'ils jurerent tous contre l'auteur d'un meurtre si détestable : ils en ont en effet tué

& mangé un grand nombre depuis ce tems-là, sans distinction de l'innocent, ou du coupable. Les armes de ces Antropophages sont ordinairement l'arc & la fléche, avec lesquelles ils sont tellement adroits, qu'ils tuent au vol toute sorte d'oiseaux, & [458] qu'ils transpercent assez souvent leurs ennemis de part en part : les coups en sont tres-dangereux ; par ce qu'il y a toûjours au bout de ces fléches une espece de dard, qui reste dans la plaie, quand on les veut retirer. Quelques-uns cependant ont l'usage des fuzils, aussi-bien que nos Gaspesiens, qui ont désolé deux ou trois fois la Nation des petits Eskimaux.

On ne voit pas de bagage, ni de femmes dans leur armée, comme dans celle de Darius, à qui un trop grand attirail fit perdre la vie, avec le Roïaume. Nos Guerriers n'ont rien de superflu : ils se contentent, comme les Soldats d'Alexandre, d'avoir de bonnes armes, & fort peu de provisions, quoiqu'ils portent [459] la guerre dans les Païs les plus éloignez, où ils trouvent abondamment ce qui leur est necessaire ; parce qu'il y a tous les jours une bande de Sauvages qui chassent, pour nourrir le corps de l'armée, qui gagne toûjours païs.

Jamais ils n'implorent le secours de leurs alliez, que dans la derniere necessité ; trouvant dans leur ambition assez de courage, pour combatre & vaincre leurs ennemis, lorsqu'ils ne sont pas invincibles : ils demandent cependant des troupes auxiliaires à leurs alliez, s'ils ne peuvent terminer eux-mêmes leurs differens ; & ils députent des Ambassadeurs, avec de coliers de pourcelaine, pour les inviter à lever la hache contre les ennemis de la Nation.

[460] Jamais encore on ne déclare la guerre, que par le conseil des Anciens, qui seuls decident en dernier ressort des affaires du Païs, & prescrivent l'ordre qu'il faut tenir dans l'éxecution de leurs entreprises militaires : ils fixent le jour du départ, & convoquent au festin de guerre les jeunes Guerriers, qui s'y trouvent avec leurs armes ordinaires, bien resolus de combatre genereusement pour les interêts de la Nation. Ils se matachient la face de rouge, avant que de partir; afin, disent-ils, de cacher à leurs camarades & à leurs ennemis, les differens changemens de couleur, que la crainte naturelle du combat fait paroître quelquefois sur le visage, & dans le cœur des plus bra- [461] ves & des plus intrepides.

Les harangues, les festins, les chansons & les danses ne sont pas plûtôt achevez, qu'ils s'embarquent dans des chaloupes, & traversent aux Isles de Maingan, païs des petits Eskimaux : il n'est pas de femmes, ni de filles qui n'excitent leurs maris & les jeunes gens à bien faire leur devoir.

Etant arrivez chez les ennemis, ils reconnoissent le terrein, observent les endroits où sont cabannez les Eskimaux ; ils les attaquent vigoureusement, & levent la chevelure à tous ceux qui succombent sous la force de leurs armes, s'ils sont assez heureux pour demeurer les maîtres du champ de bataille.

C'est pour satisfaire à leur [462] cruauté, que tous ces Barbares portent toûjours un coûteau pendu à leur col, avec lequel ils font des incisions à la tête de leurs ennemis, & enlevent la peau à laquelle sont attachez les cheveux, qu'ils emportent, comme les monumens glorieux de leur valeur, & de leur generosité : semblables en cela à nos anciens Gaulois, qui ne faisoient pas moins de trophée que nos Gaspesiens, de la tête de leurs ennemis, qu'ils laissoient pendre au poitrail de leurs chevaux, au retour de la guerre. Ils les attachoient même à leurs portes, à peu prés comme on fait encore aujourd'hui les hures des ours & des sangliers.

Le combat fini, tous nos Guerriers s'embarquent pour [463] retourner au Païs, où tous ceux de la Nation les reçoivent, avec des réjoüissances extraor-

dinaires. Les filles & les femmes paroissent toutes matachiées, & parées de leurs coliers de rassade & de pourcelaine, sur le bord de l'eau, aussi-tôt qu'on apperçoit les chaloupes victorieuses des Gaspesiens ; afin de recevoir les trophées & les chevelures que leurs maris apportent du combat : elles se jettent même à l'eau avec precipitation, pour les aller querir, & plongent dans la riviere ou dans la mer, à chaque fois que les Guerriers font des huées & cris de joie, qui marquent le nombre des ennemis qu'ils ont tué sur la place, & des prisonniers qu'ils amenent, pour leur faire souffrir les tourmens & les [464] les suplices ordinaires.

Si quelqu'un d'entr'eux est resté dans le combat, ils en font un deüil particulier, & donnent quelques jours à la douleur & à la tristesse. On fait ensuite les festins des morts, où le Chef expose dans sa harangue les belles actions de ceux qui se sont distinguez, & qui sont morts dans le combat. Un profond silence suit immediatement ; mais il est tout à coup interrompu par les parens des défunts, qui s'écrient de toutes leurs forces, & disent : Qu'il ne s'agit pas de pleurer davantage un malheur auquel il n'y a plus de remede ; mais bien de vanger la mort de leurs compatriots, par une entiere desolation de leurs ennemis. C'est ainsi que nos Sauvages vivent presque [465] toûjours en guerre avec les Eskimaux ; car comme il est impossible qu'il n'en demeure toûjours quelqu'un sur la place, lorsqu'ils se batent contre ces Barbares, ils conçoivent aussi toûjours de nouveaux desseins de s'en vanger, à quelque prix que ce soit.

Les prisonniers cependant, sont ceux qui souffrent le plus : en effet, si les Diomedes, le Buziris, les Diocletiens, les Nerons, & leurs semblables, vivoient encore, je crois qu'ils auroient en horreur la vengeance, les suplices, & la cruauté des Sauvages de la Nouvelle France, & sur tout des Iroquois, envers leurs prisonniers ; car enfin, couper les doigts à leurs ennemis, ou les brûler avec des tisons ardens par tout le corps ; leur arra- [466] cher les ongles ; leur faire manger leur propre chair, aprés qu'elle est toute grillée & rôtie par la violence du feu ; verser du sable brûlant & tout rouge, sur les plaies du patient ; passer des bâtons dans les nerf des bras & des jambes, & les tourner jusques à ce que le corps devienne en double, par la retraction de ces nerfs ; faire rougir des haches, & les mettre en forme de colier embrasées sur le corps : ce ne sont là que les suplices ordinaires, que les Iroquois & les autres Nations font souffrir à leurs prisonniers.

Il m'a paru même, que nos anciens Gaspesiens n'ont pas été moins cruels que les autres ; puisque de nos Sauvages d'aujourd'hui ont fait [467] voir depuis quelques années, un reste de leur cruauté, dans la guerre qu'ils eurent avec les Anglois de la Nouvelle Angleterre : en effet, aïant pris dans la chaleur du combat, un Officier Anglois qui s'étoit fait distinguer, par le grand nombre des Sauvages qu'il avoit couchez sur le carreau ; ces Barbares animez de rage & de vangeance, le dépoüillerent tout nud, & firent dessus son corps plusieurs incisions, dans lesquelles ils passerent & lierent tous les rubans qu'il avoit dessus son habit ; mais avec tant d'inhumanité, que ce pauvre Anglois expira dans ce cruel suplice. Ils ne sont pas cependant si cruels à l'égard des femmes & des enfans : bien au contraire, ils les nourissent & les élevent [468] parmi ceux de leur Nation ; ou bien ils les renvoïent ordinairement chez eux, sans leur faire aucun mal. On leur casse cependant quelquefois la tête, à coups de hache, ou de massuë.

On auroit peine à croire la constance avec laquelle les prisonniers souffrent toutes les cruautez de leurs ennemis, qu'ils bravent même au milieu des suplices ;

jusqu'à leur reprocher qu'ils n'entendent rien à les faire souffrir, & les menacer de les traiter bien plus cruellement, s'ils les tenoient dans leur Païs. Vous diriez, à les voir chanter au milieu des brasiers qui les environnent de toutes parts, qu'ils sont insensibles à ces ardeurs : Hé bien, vous me tuërez, disent-ils à leurs boureaux ; vous [469] me brûlerez : mais aussi il faut que vous sçachiez que j'en ai tué & brûlé plusieurs des vôtres : Si vous me mangez, je me console d'avoir aussi mangé quelques-uns de vôtre Nation. Faites donc tout ce que vous voudrez ; j'ai des oncles, j'ai des neveux, des freres & des cousins, qui vangeront bien ma mort, & qui vous feront souffrir plus de tourmens, que vous n'en sçauriez inventer contre moi. Mourir de cette sorte chez les Sauvages, c'est mourir en grand Capitaine, & en homme de cœur : aussi ces Barbares font-ils boire à leurs enfans le sang de ceux qui meurent sans se plaindre dans les tourmens ; afin de leur en inspirer le courage & la generosité. C'est une réjoüissance publique, lorsque le pa- [470] tient pleure, se plaint, ou soûpire dans l'excez de ses douleurs : c'est pourquoy ces Bârbares luy font souffrir tous les maux imaginables, afin d'obliger celuy qu'ils tourmentent à se plaindre & confesser qu'ils sont adroits & ingenieux à tourmenter les prisonniers.

## CHAPITRE XVIII.

### *De la Chasse des Gaspesiens.*

NOS Sauvages n'ont pas d'employ plus honorable que la chasse, aprés la guerre ; & ils ne s'acquierent pas moins de gloire & de reputation, par le nombre des orignaux & des castors qu'ils surprennent & qu'ils tüent à [471] la chasse, que par le nombre des chevelures qu'ils enlevent de dessus la tête de leurs ennemis.

La chasse à l'élan ou orignac, se fait en toutes les saisons de l'année : celle de l'Hiver est la plus commode & la plus favorable, principalement lorsque la neige est haute, ferme, dure & gelée, à cause que les Sauvages aïant des raquettes aux pieds, approchent facilement de l'élan, qui enfonce, & ne peut se dérober à la poursuite des Chasseurs. Il n'en est pas de-même en Eté, parce que ces animaux courent avec tant de vîtesse, qu'il est presque impossible de les joindre, quelquefois même aprés dix jours de course.

L'orignac est haut comme un cheval ; il a le poil grison, [472] la tête à peu prés comme celle d'un mulet, & porte son bois double comme le cerf, excepté qu'il est large comme une planche, & long de deux à trois pieds, garni aux deux côtez de cornichons, qui tombent l'Automne, & se multiplient au Printems, par autant de nouvelles branches qu'il a d'années. Il broute l'herbe, & paît dans les prairies sur le bord des rivieres, & dans les forêts durant l'Eté : il mange en Hiver, les pointes des arbres les plus tendres. Il a le pied fourchu : le gauche de derriere guerit du haut-mal ; mais il faut le prendre, disent les Sauvages, dans le tems qu'il tombe luy-même de ce mal, duquel il se guerit en portant ce pied gauche à son oreille. On trouve dans [473] son cœur un petit os, que les Gaspesiens appellent *Oagando hi guidanne*, qui est un remede

souverain pour faciliter les couches des femmes, & les délivrer des tranchées & des douleurs de l'enfantement, en le prenant dans du boüillon, aprés l'avoir réduit premierement en poudre. Il pleure comme les cerfs & les biches, lorsqu'il est pris & qu'il ne peut échaper la mort : les larmes luy tombent des yeux, grosses comme des pois. Il ne laisse pas cependant de se défendre de son mieux : les approches même en sont assez dangereuses ; parce qu'à la faveur d'un chemin qu'il a l'adresse de batre avec ses pieds, il s'élance quelquefois avec tant de furie sur les Chasseurs & sur les chiens, qu'il ensevelit & les [474] uns & les autres dans la neige ; ensorte que plusieurs Sauvages en sont souvent estropiez, leurs chiens restant morts sur la place. Les Chasseurs connoissent les endroits où les orignaux se retirent, par certaines pointes d'arbres rongées ou rompuës, qu'ils appellent Pactagane, c'est à dire le ravage de l'élan : ils mâchent ce bois, & ils reconnoissent au goût de ces branches, le tems que ces animaux ont passé par ces endroits. Ils les surprennent quelquefois à l'affût, & par de certains colets faits de grosses courroies de cuir, & tendus à la passe ordinaire de cet animal.

La maniere la plus industrieuse de nos Gaspesiens pour surprendre l'orignac, est celle-ci. Les Chasseurs connoissant [475] l'endroit de la riviere où il se retire ordinairement quand il entre en chaleur, s'embarquent la nuit dans leur canot ; & approchant de la prairie où il se retire, broute l'herbe, & se couche ordinairement, l'un contrefait le cri de la femelle, & l'autre prend en même-tems de l'eau dans son plat d'écorce, & la laisse tomber goute à goute, comme si c'étoit la femelle même qui quittât son eau. Le mâle approche, & les Sauvages qui sont aux aguets le tuent à coups de fuzil : adresse & subtilité dont ils usent aussi à l'égard de la femelle, en contrefaisant le mâle.

La chasse du castor est aussi facile en Eté, qu'elle est penible en Hiver ; quoiqu'elle soit également agreable & di- [476] vertissante dans l'une & dans l'autre de ces deux saisons, pour le plaisir qu'on a de voir l'industrie naturelle de cet animal, laquelle surpasse l'imagination de ceux qui n'en ont pas vû les effets surprenans : aussi les Sauvages disent-ils que les castors ont de l'esprit ; qu'ils font une Nation à part ; & qu'ils cesseroient de leur faire la guerre, s'ils parloient tant soit peu, pour leur apprendre s'ils sont de leurs amis, ou de leurs ennemis.

Le castor est de la grosseur d'un chien barbet : son poil est châtain, noir, & rarement blanc ; mais toûjours fort doux, & propre à faire des chapeaux : c'est le grand commerce de la Nouvelle France. Les Gaspesiens disent que le castor est le bien-aimé des François & [477] des autres Europeans, qui les recherchent avec avidité ; & je n'ai pû m'empêcher de rire, entendant un Sauvage qui me disoit en se gaussant : *Tahoé messet kogoüar pajo ne daoüi dogoüil mkobit.* En verité, mon frere, le castor fait parfaitement bien toutes choses ; il nous fait des chaudieres, des haches, des épées, des coûteaux ; & nous donne à boire & à manger, sans avoir la peine de labourer la terre.

Cet animal a les pieds courts : ceux de devant sont faits en ongles, ceux de derriere en nageoires ; à peu prés comme les loups marins. Il marche fort lentement. On l'a crû pour un tems amphibie, moitié chair, moitié poisson ; parce qu'il a sa queuë à peu prés de la figure d'une sole, garnie [478] d'écailles qui ne se levent pas : mais à present, on le mange comme poisson en Carême ; soit qu'il le soit en effet, soit pour ôter les abus qui se commettoient, plusieurs reduisant en queuë plus de la moitié du corps de cet animal. Il a la tête grosse

& courte : ses machoires sont armées de quatre grosses dents tranchantes, sçavoir deux en-haut, & deux en-bas, qui sont propres à polir l'or & l'argent, étant dures & douces tout ensemble. C'est avec ces quatre dents, que le castor coupe des petites perches pour faire sa cabanne, & des arbres gros comme la cuisse, qu'il fait tomber justement dans l'endroit même où il prévoit qu'ils luy seront plus utiles & plus necessaires : il découpe [479] ces arbres par morceaux de longueurs differentes, selon l'usage qu'il en veut faire ; il les roule sur la terre, ou les pousse à l'eau avec ses pates de devant, pour bâtir sa cabanne, & fortifier une digue qui arrête le courant d'un ruisseau, & forme un étang considerable, sur le bord duquel il se loge ordinairement. Il y a toûjours un maître castor, qui preside à ce travail, & qui frape même ceux qui ne font pas bien leur devoir. Ils charient tous la terre sur leur queuë, marchant sur les pates de derriere, & portant dans celles de devant, le bois qui leur est necessaire pour achever leur ouvrage : ils mêlent la terre avec le bois, & font une espece de maçonnerie avec leur queuë, [480] à peu prés comme les Maçons avec leur truelle. Ils élevent des chaussées & des digues larges de deux ou trois pieds, hautes de douze ou quinze pieds, & longues de vingt ou trente ; mais si difficiles & si mal-aisées à rompre, que c'est veritablement le plus rude travail de la chasse au castor, qui par ces digues font d'un petit ruisseau, un étang si considerable, qu'ils inondent assez souvent une grande étenduë de païs. Ils embarrassent même tellement les rivieres, qu'il faut se mettre souvent à l'eau, pour monter les canots par dessus les digues ; comme il m'est arrivé plusieurs fois, en allant de Nipisiguit à la Riviere de Sainte-Croix, & autres endroits de la Gaspesie.

[481] La cabanne du castor est haute de sept à huit pieds, si bien maçonnée & mastiquée avec la terre & le bois, que la pluie, ni le vent n'y peuvent entrer : elle est divisée en trois étages, où logent separément les grands, les moïens, & les petits, qui couchent sur de la paille, avec cette circonstance digne de remarque, que le nombre de ces animaux, qui multiplient beaucoup, venant à augmenter, les plus vieux cedent la cabanne aux plus jeunes, qui ne manquent jamais de les assister à bâtir une maison ; comme si ces animaux vouloient donner une leçon naturelle aux peres & aux enfans, de se soulager reciproquement les uns & les autres.

Le castor ne se nourrit pas [482] dans l'eau, comme quelques-uns se sont imaginez : il prend sa nourriture à terre, & mange certaines écorces d'arbre, qu'il découpe par morceaux & transporte dans sa cabanne, pour en faire sa provision durant l'Hiver. La chair en est delicate, à peu prés comme celle de mouton. Les roignons sont recherchez par les Apoticaires ; & on s'en sert avec succez, pour soulager les femmes en couche, & appaiser les vapeurs.

Quelque chasse qu'on fasse du castor, soit en Hiver, ou en Eté, il faut toûjours rompre & briser la cabanne, dont nos Sauvages observent éxactement toutes les avenuës ; afin d'assieger & d'attaquer plus seurement cet animal, qui est retranché dans son petit fort.

[483] Au Printems & l'Eté, ils se prennent à la trape, laquelle venant à se détendre, une grosse piece de bois leur tombe dessus le corps, & les assomme : mais il n'est rien de si divertissant, que la chasse de l'Hiver, qui est cependant tres-penible & laborieuse ; & en effet il faut, & on est obligé de troüer la glace à plus de quarante ou cinquante endroits, rompre les digues, briser les cabannes, & faire écouler les eaux, pour observer & découvrir plus aisément les castors,

qui se joüent, se moquent & se dérobent bien souvent à la poursuite du Chasseur, en s'échapant de leur étang, par une sortie secrete que ces animaux ont l'instinct de laisser à leur chaussée, qui a communication avec un [484] autre étang voisin.

Je passe ici sous silence, les differentes chasses des loutres, des ours, des cerfs, & de quantité d'autres animaux de la Gaspesie ; parce qu'elles n'ont rien de considerable, & qu'il est plus à propos de donner ici au Lecteur, la connoissance des especes differentes des bêtes-fauves, d'oiseaux, & des poissons qui se trouvent dans la Gaspesie : où l'on voit premiérement trois sortes de perdrix, dont les unes ont l'œil faizané, & sont d'un plumage mêlé de blanc, de noir, de gris, & d'orange : les autres sont grises ; & j'en ai vû plusieurs durant l'Hiver, qui étoient toutes blanches. Les perdrix du Canada se perchent & se juchent sur les arbres, & mangent le bouleau [485] ou le sapin, qui leur communique un peu de son amertume : l'estomac en est blanc & delicat, comme celuy d'un chapon ; & celles qui ne mangent que du bouleau sont fort excellentes, en quelque maniere qu'on les accommode. La chasse en est facile, principalement au Printems, lorsqu'elle veut faire sa ponce ; parce qu'elle fait un bruit avec le batement de ses aîles, qui la découvre au Chasseur : & elle est si peu farouche, qu'on la chasse comme les poules devant soi, & se laisse approcher, jusqu'à souffrir qu'on luy presente un colet attaché au bout d'une perche, dans lequel elle passe le tête, & facilite ainsi le moïen de la prendre.

Les canards Canadiens sont [486] semblables à ceux que nous avons en France ; on en voit cependant une espece differente, que nous appellons canards branchus, qui se juchent sur les arbres, & dont le plumage est tres-beau, pour la diversité agreable des couleurs qui le composent.

L'oiseau mouche, que quelques-uns appellent l'oiseau du Ciel, est de la grosseur d'une noix : il a le bec mince & pointu comme une éguille : il ne vit que du suc des fleurs, comme les mouches à miel : son plumage est d'une beauté ravissante, principalement celuy de la gorge, qui est embelli d'un azur & d'un rouge éclatant, qu'on ne peut assez admirer, sur tout quand il est exposé au Soleil. Nos Gaspesiens l'appellent Nirido ; & [487] on n'en fait la chasse seulement que par curiosité : on charge même les fuzils de sable ; parce que le plomb le plus menu seroit assez gros pour écraser ce petit oiseau, que l'on fait secher au four & au Soleil, de crainte que la corruption ne se mette dans un corps qui paroît tout de plume.

Les pic-bois, que nous appellons de ce nom, parce qu'ils prennent leur nourriture en picotant les troncs des arbres qui sont pourris, se distinguent par deux sortes de plumage ; les uns sont mouchetez de noir & blanc ; les autres sont tout noirs, & portent sur la tête une huppe d'un rouge admirablement beau : ils ont la langue extrémement dure, & aiguë comme des éguilles, avec laquelle ils font dans les [488] arbres, des trous à y mettre le poing.

Les aigles, les titiais, les rossignols, dont le chant n'est pas si charmant, à beaucoup prés, que ceux de l'Europe ; l'outarde, l'oie, les canards, les cignes, cormorans, siffleurs, le goislan, la margot, les beccasses, beccassines, ortolans, grives, merles, pies, corbeaux, marionnets ; des oiseaux même tout blancs, tout rouges, bleus, jaunes, & une infinité d'autres, sont fort communs dans la Gaspesie, mais qu'on ne connoît pas en France, & dont le recit seroit inutile, pour n'avoir rien de plus curieux que les noms qu'on leur donne.

On voit encore chez nos Gaspesiens trois sortes de loups : le loup servier est d'un [489] poil argenté ; il a deux cornichons à la tête, qui sont de poil tout

noir : la viande en est assez bonne, quoiqu'elle sent un peu trop le sauvagin. Cet animal est plus affreux à voir, que cruel : la peau est tres-bonne, pour en faire des fourrures.

Le loup marin est une espece de poisson, dont la peau est mouchetée d'un poil noir & blanc : il fait ses petits à terre, ou sur quelques rochers ; la mere a l'instinct de les porter sur son dos, pour les apprendre à nager, lorsqu'ils sont trop fatiguez dans l'eau. Leurs pieds sont fort courts ; ceux de devant faits en ongles, & ceux de derriere en nageoires. Ils ne marchent pas, mais ils rampent sur le sable ; où ils dorment & se divertissent au [490] Soleil, principalement quand la marée est basse, qui est le tems le plus propre & le plus commode pour en faire la chasse, qui est d'un tres grand profit, tant à cause de l'huile, que pour le debit considerable qu'on fait de la peau de ces poissons, dont quelques-uns sont aussi grands & aussi gros que des chevaux & des bœufs. Ces loups marins s'appellent Metauh, pour les distinguer d'avec les communs, qui s'appellent Oüaspous : la chair en est passablement bonne, & la fressûre paroît d'aussi bon goût, que celle du porc. Les autres loups sont à peu prés comme ceux de nôtre Europe, excepté qu'ils ne sont pas si méchans, ni si cruels.

Les liévres de Canada sont [491] fort differens de ceux de France, & ils ressemblent aux lapins : la chair cependant en est assez delicate, sur tout quand on la met en pâte, ou en civet. Plusieurs ont un goût d'amertume, à cause du sapin qu'ils mangent durant l'Hiver, étant assez probable qu'ils paissent l'herbe en Eté. Ce qu'on remarque de curieux dans ces animaux, c'est que leur poil change de couleur, selon le cours des saisons de l'année : il commence à blanchir, aux approches de l'Hiver ; & il est tout-à-fait blanc, quand la terre est couverte de neige : mais il perd cette blancheur & devient tout gris, au Printemps, & durant l'Eté.

Les ours, le quinquajou, les cerfs, les renards, caribous, [492] martes, porcs-épis, rats-musquez, écureüils, &c., sont autant d'animaux qu'on trouve communément dans la Gaspesie ; où l'on voit encore une prodigieuse quantité de toute sorte de poisson, moruë, saumon, harans, truites, bar, maquereau, barbuë, aloze, esturgeon, carpes, brochets, brémes, anguilles, ancornets, poisson doré, huîtres, esplan, raie, poisson blanc : en un mot, on peut dire que la chasse & la pêche y sont abondantes, & qu'on y trouve, sans beaucoup de peines, toutes les choses necessaires à la vie.

C'est un plaisir d'y voir encore ce nombre prodigieux de baleines ; mais sur tout, le combat terrible de ce poisson monstrueux avec l'espadon, lequel porte dessus son dos une [493] espece d'épée ou de dard, qui luy sert d'armes offensives & défensives, pour attaquer & se défendre des aîlerons & de la queuë de la baleine. Il est surprenant de voir les approches & les attaques mutuelles de ces deux puissans ennemis, qui mugissent comme des taureaux animez de rage & de fureur ; l'espadon s'élance hors de l'eau, & tombe de toute sa force à la renverse dessus la baleine, afin de la percer de son dard. La baleine se plonge l'eau, & se dérobe aux coups de l'espadon, qu'elle tâche de batre & de vaincre avec sa queuë & ses aîlerons, dont le bruit se fait entendre de plus d'une lieuë. La mer paroît toute agitée, par les mouvemens & les efforts violens de ces pois- [494] sons formidables ; & elle devient toute rouge de leur sang, qui sort en abondance de leurs plaies, qui les font mourir quelquefois : telle étoit la baleine que nous trouvâmes échoüée à la côte, à quinze lieuës de la riviere de Saint Joseph, dite Ristigouche ; le sable qui la couvroit nous empêcha de voir les coups

furieux qu'elle avoit reçûs de l'espadon, nous n'en vîmes que deux ou trois, qui paroissoient fort larges & profonds. Quoique la baleine soit un poisson d'une grosseur & d'une force prodigieuse, elle ne peut cependant renverser, ni briser avec sa queuë les navires, comme plusieurs se le persuadent un peu trop facilement.

Le requin, que quelques-uns appellent requiem, est un [495] poisson fort dangereux, armé de deux [à trois] rangées de dents, long de quatre à cinq pieds, & gros à proportion. Il est tres-dangereux de se baigner dans les endroits où ce poisson se retire ordinairement ; parce qu'il court aprés ceux qu'il apperçoit dans l'eau, & leur coupe un bras ou une cuisse, qu'il mange & qu'il devore en même-tems. Je me souviens qu'un pauvre passager s'étant jetté à la mer par divertissement, pour se baigner dans un tems de calme, beau & serain, fut assez malheureux de rencontrer un de ces requiem, qui ne luy fit aucun mal, aussi long-tems qu'il fut à l'eau ; mais dés-lors que ceux du navire se mirent en état d'enlever ce pauvre miserable, le requin s'élança [496] sur luy, & luy coupa la cuisse avant qu'il fût dans le vaisseau, où il mourut deux heures aprés.

## CHAPITRE XIX.

*Les festins, les danses, & les divertissemens des Gaspesiens.*

ON ne trouve guere de Nation qui ait les festins plus en usage que les Sauvages de la Nouvelle France, mais principalement nos Gaspesiens, qui regardent plûtôt l'affection & la sincerité d'une amitié veritablement cordiale, dans le peu qu'ils donnent, ou qu'ils reçoivent de leurs amis, que la quantité & la qualité des viandes ; puisqu'avec un [497] morceau de tabac, ou quelqu'autre chose de peu de consequence, ils se regalent les uns les autres, comme s'ils se faisoient des festins les plus grands du monde : d'où vient que les plus miserables, si on peut dire qu'il y en ait quelques-uns dans cette Nation de Barbares, qui ne met aucune, ou fort peu de distinction entre le riche & le pauvre, trouvent toûjours, dans le peu qu'ils possedent, dequoy rendre la pareille à leurs amis, & faire des festins aussi considerables, que ceux ausquels on les a invitez.

Je me suis servi heureusement de cette grande facilité que l'on a de contenter ces Peuples, & de s'insinuer dans leur amitié, par des festins qui ne coûtent pas grand' chose, [498] lorsqu'un Sauvage m'étant venu prier d'aller baptiser une petit enfant, qui mourut deux jours aprés son baptême, dans la Baye de Gachpé, je demeurai le reste de l'Hiver avec ces Infideles, pour tâcher de les gagner à JESUS-CHRIST. Monsieur Denys avoit donné à nôtre Gaspesien, des pois & de la farine, pour en regaler les cabannes, par deux festins que j'avois dessein de leur faire, & qui en effet me gagnerent pour toûjours l'amitié de ces Barbares. Je formai avec toute ma farine, autant de cœurs que nous étions de personnes ; & les aïant fait cuire dans une chaudiere, avec de la moëlle d'orignac, je les arrangeai tous dans un plat d'écorce, en sorte que le plus grand de ces cœurs, qui re- [499] presentoit le mien, cachoit & couvroit les plus petits, qui figuroient ceux des Sauvages : je leur fis la harangue ordinaire, qui doit preceder toûjours

les festins, en leur disant ; Que la nature ne m'aïant donné qu'un cœur, la charité & le zele que j'avois pour leur salut, me faisoient souhaiter avec passion, qu'ils se multipliât en autant de Gaspesiens, qu'ils étoient presens à mes yeux ; voulant bien même y comprendre les absens, pour leur témoigner à tous ègalement, mon estime & mon affection : Que par le plus grand de tous ces cœurs qui cachoit les autres, je voulois leur faire connoître qu'ils logeroient doresnavant par inclination dans le mien ; que je les prenois tous sous ma protection, pour [500] leur procurer tous les avantages qu'ils en pouvoient raisonnablement esperer, soit pour le spirituel, soit pour le temporel : & qu'enfin, je ne les avois arrangez tous ensemble dans un même plat d'écorce, qu'afin de leur faire connoître que les nôtres ne devoient plus jamais se separer d'inclination, mais bien s'unir étroitement par les liens indissolubles de la charité Chrêtienne. Cette petite harangue se termina par le present & la distribution que je fis de tous ces cœurs, à chaque Sauvage, en luy disant ces paroles : *Taboé nkameramon ignemoulo ; nkameramon achkou oüiguidex :* Mon frere, je te donne mon cœur ; tu demeureras & tu cabanneras doresnavant dans mon cœur. Il n'est [501] pas croïable combien ces Barbares furent satisfaits de mon regale, qu'ils reçûrent avec toute la joie possible : les Chefs me firent des festins publics & particuliers, pour me témoigner qu'ils m'enfantoient, c'est à dire qu'ils m'adoptoient & me recevoient au nombre des Sauvages Gaspesiens : ils me conjurerent tous de rester avec eux, afin de me perfectionner dans la langue ; ce que je leur accordai d'autant plus volontiers, que la demande & la priere qu'ils m'en faisoient, étoit conforme à mes inclinations.

Cependant, quoique ces Barbares se passent de peu dans leurs festins, ils ne laissent pas quelquefois d'y faire paroître une grande profusion de viandes, particulierement dans [502] ceux qu'ils font le Printems, pour se réjoüir ensemble de l'heureux succez de la chasse qu'ils ont faite durant l'Hiver. Ils n'observent aucune regle d'œconomie dans ces sortes de festins ; afin de témoigner à leurs amis, la joie qu'ils ont de les posseder. Les femmes, les enfans, ni les jeunes garçons qui n'ont pas encore tué d'orignac, & tous ceux qui ne sont pas en état d'aller en guerre contre la Nation, n'entrent pas ordinairement dans les cabannes de festin : il faut attendre le signal que donne un Sauvage, par deux ou trois huées differentes, qui font connoître aux femmes qu'il est tems de venir prendre les restes de la portion de leurs maris, dont elles se regalent avec leur famille, & leurs amis.

[503] La façon d'inviter au festin, est sans compliment & sans ceremonie ; & on n'invite personne, que tout ce qu'on leur veut donner ne soit cuit auparavant : celuy qui traite fait à la porte de sa cabanne, le cri du festin, en disant ces paroles : *Chigoüidah, ouikbarlno :* Venez ici dans ma cabanne, car je veux vous regaler. Ceux ausquels ces paroles s'adressent, y répondent par trois ou quatre huées de ho, ho, ho, ho, sortent promtement de chez eux avec leur ouragan, entrent dans la cabanne du festin, prennent la premiere place qui se presente, fument du tabac dans le calumet du Chef, & reçoivent sans compliment la portion que celuy qui partage & distribuë la viande, leur jette, ou leur donne [504] au bout d'un bâton.

Jamais les Gaspesiens ne font festin de deux sortes de viandes à la fois : ils ne mélangent pas, par éxemple, le castor avec l'orignac, ni celuy-ci avec l'ours, ou quelque autre animal ; ils font même des regales où l'on y boit la graisse & l'huile toute pure. Il y a des festins de santé, d'adieu, de chasse, de paix, de

guerre de remercîment, des festins à tout manger, qui se font expressément pour avoir bonne chasse ; c'est à dire qu'il faut tout avaler, avant que de sortir de la cabanne ; & il est défendu d'en donner tant soit peu aux chiens, sous peine d'être exposé à de grands malheurs : il est cependant permis à ceux qui ne peuvent achever leur portion, [505] de les presenter à leurs compagnons, qui en prennent chacun ce qu'il en souhaite ; le reste est jetté au feu, en faisant les éloges de celuy qui dans ce rencontre s'est acquis la reputation & la gloire d'avoir mangé plus que les autres.

Tous les festins se commencent par les harangues que le Chef fait aux conviez, afin de leur déclarer le sujet pour lequel il a voulu regaler la compagnie ; & on les finit par les danses & les chansons, qui sont les complimens ordinaires de nos Sauvages. Le Maître du festin ne mange pas ordinairement avec les autres ; parce. dit-il, qu'il ne les a pas appellez pour diminuer la portion de ce qu'il leur presente, le tout etant uni- [506] quement pour eux.

Leurs chansons & leurs danses sont également desagreables, puisqu'ils n'y observent aucune regle, ni mesure, que celle que leur caprice leur inspire : ils ont neanmoins communément assez bonne voix, & sur tout les femmes, qui chantent fort agreablement les Cantiques spirituels qu'on leur enseigne, & dans lesquels elles font consister une bonne partie de leur devotion. Elles n'ont pas le même agrément à chanter à la mode des Sauvages, qui poussent du fond de leur estomac, certains tons d'ho ho ho, ha ha ha, hé hé hé, ho ho, ha he he, qui passent pour des airs également charmans & melodieux, chez nos Gaspesiens.

Ils dansent ordinairement en [507] rond, à la cadance & au bruit qu'on fait en frapant avec un bâton sur un plat d'écorce, ou dessus une chaudiere. Ils ne se tiennent pas par la main, mais ils ont tous les poings fermez : les filles les croisent l'une sur l'autre, un peu éloignées de leur estomac : les hommes les élevent en l'air, & font plusieurs mouvemens & postures differentes, comme s'ils étoient à la guerre pour combatre, vaincre, & enlever les chevelures de leurs ennemis. Ils ne sautent pas ; mais en récompense ils frapent la terre, tantôt avec un pied, tantôt avec tous les deux ensemble.

Les danses particulieres des femmes & des filles sont beaucoup differentes de celles des hommes ; car elles font des [508] contorsions horribles en dansant : elles retirent & avancent les bras, les mains & tout le corps d'une maniere tout-à-fait hideuse, regardant fixement la terre, comme si elles en vouloient arracher quelque chose, par la force & la violence de leurs contorsions, jusqu'à se mettre tout en eau. Elles ne poussent pas du fond de leur estomac, comme les hommes, ces huées & ces cris d'ho ho, d'ha ha, d'hé hé ; mais elles font seulement avec les levres, un certain sifflement de serpent, qui est l'harmonie ordinaire de leur danse, qu'on peut appeller proprement un sabat innocent de Sauvages.

Outre ces danses & ces festins, ils ont pour leur divertissement ordinaire, les jeux de Leldestaganne & du Chagat, [509] qui se joüent avec des petits os noirs & blancs : celuy-là gagne la partie, qui fait venir tout blanc, ou tout noir, autant de fois qu'ils en font convenus. Ils sont tres-fideles à payer ce qu'ils ont perdu au jeu, sans qu'ils se querellent, ou qu'ils avancent la moindre parole d'impatience ; parce, disent-ils, qu'ils ne joüent que pour se divertir, & se consoler avec leurs amis. Il *y* a encore quelques autres sortes de jeux & de divertissemens parmi nos Sauvages, mais qui sont de si peu de consequence, qu'ils ne meritent pas qu'on en fasse ici aucune mention.

[510] CHAPITRE XX.

*Des remedes, maladies & mort des Gaspesiens.*

ILS sont tous naturellement Chirurgiens, Apoticaires & Medecins, par la connoissance & par l'experience qu'ils ont de certains simples, dont ils se servent heureusement, pour guerir des maux qui nous paroissent incurables.

Il est vrai que nos Gaspesiens joüissent souvent d'une santé parfaite, jusqu'à une heureuse vieillesse, n'étant pas sujets à plusieurs maladies qui nous affligent en France ; comme gouttes, gravelle, écroüelles, galle, &c. soit parce qu'ils sont engendrez par des parens [511] qui sont sains & dispos, d'une humeur & d'un sang bien temperez ; soit à cause que, comme nous avons dit, ils vivent en parfaite union & concorde, sans procez & sans chicane pour les biens du monde, qui ne leur font jamais perdre le repos, & leur tranquillité ordinaire.

Ils previennent les incommoditez & les maladies, par certains vomitifs, composez d'une racine faite à peu prés comme celle de la chicorée, ou par certaine graine qu'ils pennent aux arbres, & qu'ils font infuser dix ou douze heures dans un plat d'écorce plein d'eau, ou de boüillon. La suërie, cependant, est le grand remede des Gaspesiens ; & on peut dire veritablement, que plusieurs François y ont aussi [512] trouvé la guerison des fluxions & douleurs inveterées, qui paroissent incurables en France. La suërie est une espece d'étuve, faite en forme d'une petite cabanne couverte d'écorce, de peau de castor & d'orignac ; en sorte qu'il n'y a aucune ouverture. Les Sauvages mettent au milieu, des roches ardentes, qui échaufent tellement ceux qui sont dedans, que l'eau coule bientôt de toutes les parties du corps. Ils jettent de l'eau dessus ces pierres embrasées, dont la fumée montant jusques au haut de la cabanne, retombe sur leur dos, à peu prés comme une pluie chaude & brûlante ; jusques-là même, que quelques-uns ne pouvant en souffrir la chaleur, se trouvent obligez d'en sortir au plus vîte.

[513] Ce qui sert de tourment aux uns, est neanmoins un sujet de divertissement pour les autres, qui prennent un plaisir singulier de jetter de l'eau de tems en tems sur ces roches, pour voir celuy qui aura plus de constance à souffrir : ils chantent même, & se divertissent, faisant des huées à leur ordinaire ; & sortant brusquement de cette cabanne, ils se jettent dans la riviere pour se rafraîchir ; ce qui causeroit sans doute de grosses maladies, & la mort même, à des gens qui seroient moins robustes que nos Gaspesiens, qui mangent avec une avidité nonpareille, immediatement aprés qu'ils sont sortis de la suërie & de la riviere.

Ils sont fort amateurs de la saigné, & s'ouvrent même la [514] veine eux-mêmes, avec des pierres à feu, ou la pointe de leur coûteau. S'il paroît quelque tumeur, soit au bras, soit à la jambe, ils scarifient les endroits où est le mal ; & ils font plusieurs incisions avec les mêmes instrumens, afin d'en sucer plus commodément le sang gâté, & en retirer toute la corruption.

La gomme de sapin, que quelques-uns appellent therebentine, & qui est comme une espece de baume souverain pour toute sorte de plaies, & de coups

de hache, de coûteau & de fuzil, est le premier & le plus ordinaire remede dont nos Gaspesiens se servent avec succez, pour faire de tres-belles cures. Comme cette gomme est quelque-fois un peu trop sensible aux [515] malades, ils ont l'industrie, pour en moderer l'activité, de prendre & de mâcher la pellicule qui est attachée au sapin, aprés qu'ils en ont enlevé la premiere écorce : ils crachent l'eau qui en sort sur la partie malade, & forment du reste une espece de cataplasme, qui adoucit le mal, & guerit le blessé en tres-peu de tems.

Ils ont encore quantité de racines & de simples qui nous sont inconnus dans l'Europe, mais dont les Sauvages connoissent admirablement bien la vertu & les proprietez, pour s'en servir dans le besoin.

Les Gaspesiens & les Gaspesiennes, hommes, femmes, filles, garçons, prennent du tabac : ils le considerent, l'estiment & le regardent comme une manne qui leur est venuë [516] du Ciel, depuis que le Papkootparout en donna le premier usage à la Nation Gaspesienne, comme nous avons remarqué au Chapitre de leur croïance touchant l'Immortalité de l'Ame. En effet le tabac, qu'ils appellent *Tamahoé*, leur paroît absolument necessaire pour les aider à souffrir les disgraces de la vie humaine : il les délasse dans leurs voïages, leur donne de l'esprit dans les Conseils, decide de la paix & la guerre : il leur amortit la faim, leur sert de boire & de manger ; & fussent-ils dans la derniere foiblesse, ils esperent toûjours de revoir le malade en sa premiere santé, pourvû qu'il puisse encore fumer du tabac : le contraire est un préjugé assûré de sa mort.

[517] Si les simples, les décoctions & les remedes ordinaires, ne sont pas assez efficaces pour guerir les Gaspesiens, les amis de ceux qui sont malades ne manquent pas d'appeller au secours le Bouhine, c'est à dire le Jongleur, qui les souffle par tout, & principalement sur la partie affligée ; afin de chasser le ver, ou le Demon qui le tourmente : il fait ses invocations, ses contorsions & ses huées ordinaires, comme nous l'avons déja remarqué, en parlant des superstitions de ces Sauvages.

Il n'y en a point cependant plus à plaindre, que les malades qui souffrent sans se plaindre, le tintamarre, le bruit & le fracas du Jongleur, & de ceux de sa cabanne : il semble même que nos Gaspesiens, [518] qui d'ailleurs paroissent assez humains & dociles, manquent en ce point de charité & de complaisance pour leurs malades ; & on peut dire veritablement, qu'ils ne sçavent ce que c'est d'en prendre soin, ni de leur preparer les viandes qui les peuvent soulager, leur donnant indifferemment à boire & à manger de tout ce qu'ils desirent, & quand ils le demandent. Ils les traînent, portent, ou les embarquent avec eux dans leurs voïages, quand il y a apparence de guerison : mais si la santé du malade est tout-à-fait desesperée, en sorte qu'il ne puisse plus ni manger, ni boire, ni fumer, ils leur cassent la tête quelquefois, tant pour le délivrer du mal qu'il endure, que pour se soulager eux- [519] mêmes, de la peine qu'ils ont de le traîner par tout.

Ils ne sçavent non plus ce que c'est, que de consoler un pauvre malade ; & dés le moment qu'il ne mange plus, ou ne fume plus du tabac, ou bien qu'il perd la parole, ils l'abandonnent entierement, & ne luy disent pas une seule parole de tendresse, ni de consolation : parce que ces Barbares estiment que c'est une chose tout-à-fait inutile, de parler à une personne qui ne peut pas répondre, & qui se met en état de voïageur, pour aller avec ses compatriots & & ses ancêtres, dans le Païs des Ames ; d'où vient qu'ils expirent assez souvent, sans qu'aucun de ceux qui sont dans la cabanne s'en apperçoive : gardant cependant, [520] durant tout le tems de l'agonie, un profond silence ; & faisant

paroître dans un visage consterné, l'affliction & la douleur qu'ils reçoivent de cette fâcheuse separation.

Lorsque le moribond a rendu les derniers soûpirs, les parens & les amis du défunt couvrent le corps, d'une belle peau d'élan, ou robe de castor, dans laquelle on l'ensevelit & on le garrote avec des courroies de cuir ou d'écorce, d'une telle maniere, que le menton touche aux genoux, & les pieds à leur dos ; d'où vient que leurs fosses sont toutes rondes, de la figure d'un puits, & profondes de quatre à cinq pieds : cependant, le Chef & les Capitaines ordonnent de fraper sur les écorces de la cabanne du défunt, en di- [521] sant ces paroles, *Oué, oué, oué*, afin d'en faire sortir l'esprit. On députe ensuite de jeunes Sauvages, pour aller annoncer par toute la Nation, & même aux Habitations Françoises, la mort de leurs parens & amis. Ces Députez approchant des cabannes ausquelles ils sont envoïez, montent dessus un arbre, & crient par trois fois de toute leur force, qu'un tel Sauvage est mort ; aprés quoy ils s'approchent, & font à ceux qu'ils trouvent, le recit des circonstances de la maladie & de la mort de leur ami, les invitant d'assister à ses funerailles, qui se celebrent en cette maniere.

Tout le monde étant assemblé dans la cabanne du défunt, on transporte le corps au Cimetiere commun de la [522] Nation ; on le met dans la fosse, & on le couvre d'écorce, & des peaux les plus belles : on l'embellit même avec des branches de sapin & des rameaux de cedre, & ils y mettent ensuite tout ce qui est à l'usage du défunt ; si c'est un homme, son arc, ses fléches, son épée, son casse-tête, son fuzil, poudre, plomb, écuelle, chaudiere, raquettes, &c. si c'est une femme, son colier pour aller à la traîne ou porter le bois, sa hache, son coûteau, sa couverture, ses coliers de pourcelaine & de rassade, & ses utensiles, tant à matachier & peindre leur robe, que les éguilles à coudre les canots & à lasser les raquettes. On comble la fosse de terre, & on y met par-dessus quantité de bûches en [523] forme de mausolee, élevé de trois ou quatre pieds, sur lequel paroît une belle Croix, si le défunt est un de nos Gaspesiens Porte-Croix. L'enterrement se fait dans le silence ; pendant que le Chef & les Anciens forment un cercle auprés de la fosse, les femmes pleurent & font des cris lugubres, qui finissent par le commandement du Chef, lequel invite tous les Gaspesiens au festin de mort, où il expose dans sa harangue les belles qualitez & les actions les plus memorables du défunt : il represente même à toute l'assemblée, par des paroles aussi touchantes qu'elles sont energiques, l'instabilité de la vie humaine, & la necessité qu'ils ont de mourir, pour aller rejoindre dans le Païs des Ames, [524] leurs amis & leurs parens, dont ils renouvellent la memoire. Il s'arrête un moment, & paroît tout à coup avec un visage plus gai & moins triste, & ordonne la distribution de ce qui est apprêté pour le festin, qui est suivi de danses & des chansons ordinaires. Les parens cependant & les amis du défunt prennent le deüil, c'est à dire qu'ils se barboüillent le visage de noir, & coupent le bout de leurs cheveux, qu'il ne leur est plus permis de porter en cadenettes, ni de les orner de colier de rassade & de pourcelaine, autant de tems qu'ils sont en deüil, qui dure une année toute entiere.

Si quelque Sauvage vient à mourir durant l'Hiver, en quelque lieu éloigné du Cimetiere commun de ses ancê- [525] tres, ceux de sa cabanne l'envelopent avec beaucoup de soin, dans des écorces matachiées de rouge & de noir, le mettent dessus les branches de quelque arbre sur le bord de la riviere, & luy font avec des bûches une espece de petit fort, de crainte qu'il ne soit endom-

magé par les bêtes-fauves, ou par les oiseaux de rapine : le Chef députe au Printems la jeunesse, pour aller querir le cadavre, qui est reçû avec les mêmes ceremonies que nous venons de dire.

Nos Gaspesiens n'ont jamais brûlé les corps de leurs défunts, comme nos anciens Gaulois, qui brûloient avec leurs morts, tout ce qu'ils avoient aimé, jusqu'à leurs papiers & leurs obligations ; peut-être dans le [526] dessein de proceder, de païer, ou demander leurs dettes en l'autre monde. J'ai appris seulement de nos Sauvages, que les Chefs de leur Nation confioient autrefois les corps des défunts à certains vieillards, qui les emportoient religieusement dans une cabanne faite exprés au milieu des bois, dans laquelle ils demeuroient un mois ou six semaines. Ils ouvroient la tête & le ventre du défunt, & en ôtoient la cervelle & les entrailles, enlevoient la peau de dessus le corps, coupoient la chair par morceaux ; & l'aïant fait secher à la fumée, ou au Soleil, ils la mettoient au pied du mort, auquel ils rendoient sa peau, qu'ils accommodoient à peu prés comme si la chair n'en avoit pas été ôtée.

[527] Il y a fort peu de tems, que dans l'Isle de Tisniguet, lieu fameux & ancien Cimetiere des Gaspesiens de Ristigouche, nous trouvâmes dans les bois une fosse faite en forme de coffre, & quantité de peaux de castors & d'orignaux, des fléches, des arcs, de la pourcelaine, de la rassade, & d'autres bagatelles que les Sauvages avoient enterrées avec le défunt, dans la pensée qu'ils avoient, que les esprits de toutes ces choses luy feroient compagnie & service dans le Païs des Ames.

## [528] CHAPITRE XXI.

*Premier retour de l'Auteur en France, & la harangue que le Chef des Gaspesiens luy a faite à son départ.*

IL y avoit déja six années consecutives que je cultivois la Mission Gaspesienne, que l'obeïssance avoit commise à mes soins, lorsque le Reverend Pere Valentin le Roux nôtre Commissaire Provincial & Superieur, qui donnoit toutes ses applications, & emploïoit avec succez les ardeurs de son zele pour la gloire de Dieu, le service de la Colonie, & le progrez de nos Missions ; aïant parfaitement bien reconnu la necessité ab- [529] soluë où nous étions, d'avoir un Hospice à Quebec, pour le soulagement de nos Missionnaires ; sollicité puissamment par les principaux Habitans de Mont-Roïal, d'établir dans cette belle Isle, sous le bon plaisir & avec l'agrément de Messieurs du Seminaire de Saint Sulpice, qui en sont les Seigneurs proprietaires, une Maison de Recollets ; & d'ailleurs voulant rechercher les moïens possibles de rendre fixes & sedentaires les Missions que nous avions chez les François & les Sauvages, afin d'humaniser ces Peuples, les habituer avec nous, les appliquer à la culture des terres, les soûmettre à nos Loix & nos Coûtumes, & d'en faire de veritables Chrêtiens, aprés les avoir rendu hommes civils, [530] policez & sociables ; jugea à propos de nous envoïer en France le R. P. Exuper de Thunes, & moi, avec des lettres au Reverendissime Pere Germain Allart, depuis Evêque de Vences,

afin d'obtenir du Roi & de Messieurs de Saint Sulpice, le contenu de l'exposé, & des instructions qu'il nous remit entre les mains.

Nous nous embarquâmes à cet effet, dans le vaisseau nommé la Sainte-Anne, & nous arrivâmes heureusement à l'Isle Percée, aprés sept semaines d'une fâcheuse & penible navigation, causée par trois horribles tempêtes, dont la derniere pensa nous abîmer au milieu de sept Isles.

Comme j'étois entierement convaincu de l'affection sin- [531] cere que les Gaspesiens avoient pour moi, & qu'ils se persuadoient que je devois encore hiverner avec eux dans les bois, je crûs que j'étois obligé de faire la confidence & l'ouverture du dessein que j'avois de repasser en France, à celuy des Sauvages qui se disoit mon pere, & dont je me disois le fils, depuis le moment qu'il m'eût enfanté au milieu des festins ordinaires à la Nation Gaspesienne en semblable ceremonie. Il me seroit bien difficile de vous exprimer la consternation que cette nouvelle causa dans l'ame de ce Barbare, lequel, par le changement de couleur, le chagrin & la tristesse qui parut tout à coup sur son visage, me fit bien-tôt connoître qu'il étoit sensiblement touché de [532] la resolution où je luy paroissois, de m'embarquer dans les premiers navires de nos Pêcheurs. Il me quitta brusquement, contre sa coûtume ; il entra dans les bois, peut-être pour essuïer les larmes qui commençoient à couler de ses yeux : il en sortit quelque-tems aprés, & trouva bon d'envoïer un de ses enfans avec deux ou trois jeunes Sauvages, porter la nouvelle de mon départ aux Gaspesiens qui étoient à la pêche de saumons, & les convier de se rendre tous incessament auprés de luy, afin de me dire adieu. Il ordonna à ces Députez de ne pas approcher de leurs cabannes, qu'avec les mêmes ceremonies qu'ils observoient inviolablement lorsqu'ils vont annoncer la mort [533] de quelqu'un de leurs considerables ; parce qu'ils estimoient que j'allois mourir à leur égard, & qu'ils ne me verroient plus jamais davantage.

La promtitude avec laquelle tous ces Sauvages, baptisez & non baptisez, se rendirent à l'Isle Percée, jointe à la tendresse que ces Barbares me témoignerent, en me conjurant tous ensemble de ne les pas abandonner, me fit balancer quelque-tems sur la resolution que j'avois prise de partir ; & je vous avouë ingenûment, qu'en aïant moi-même le cœur sensiblement touché de compassion, il n'y eut precisément que le merite de l'obeïssance, qui m'ordonnoit de m'embarquer dans les premiers navires Pêcheurs, pour le bien de nos Missions, qui [534] acheva de me déterminer à repasser en France.

Le petit nombre de nos Gaspesiens que j'avois baptisez, vint de grand matin à la Chapelle, quelques-uns pour se confesser, les autres pour se faire instruire, plusieurs pour me demander des *Oukateguennes Kignamatinoër*, des Papiers instructifs à prier Dieu, & tous pour entendre la sainte Messe & la harangue ; c'est ainsi qu'ils appellerent l'exhortation que je leur fis, afin de les encourager à pratiquer fidelement ce que je leur avois enseigné. Les paroles dont Samüel se servit autrefois, quand il se déchargea de la conduite du Peuple d'Israël, en luy donnant un Roi ; & celles de l'Apôtre, lorsqu'à son départ pour Jerusalem, il [535] appella le Ciel & la Terre à témoin du zele qu'il avoit pris, d'annoncer aux Ephesiens l'Evangile du Seigneur, furent à peu prés les mêmes dont je me servis heureusement en prenant congé de mes Sauvages, qui proposerent tous d'être fideles à Dieu. Je les embrassai tendrement aprés mes actions de graces, pendant lesquelles les hommes & les femmes entonnerent & chanterent à l'alternative, des Cantiques spirituels que je leur avois enseignez, avec une harmonie

de voix si douce & si agreable, que nos François en furent sensiblement édifiez.

Comme l'on m'avoit donné quelques brasses de tabac de bresil, & qu'il me restoit uncore une douzaine [536] de petits miroirs, coûteaux, éguilles, & d'autres bagatelles, qu'ils estiment autant que nous faisons l'or & l'argent ; je les leur distribuai tres-volontiers, les conjurant affectueusement de les recevoir, comme les gages fideles & sinceres de mes amitiez. Trois Matelots qui vinrent à nôtre Chapelle de la part de leur Capitaine, pour emporter dans leur navire nôtre petit équipage, alloient finir nos entretiens, lorsque le Chef de nos Gaspesiens me supplia avec beaucoup d'instance, de ne pas permettre que ces hommes me rendissent ce service ; parce que les Sauvages en vouloient avoir l'honneur & la gloire, afin, me disoit-il, de faire paroître à tous les François, combien ils avoient [537] d'estime & d'affection pour moi. Il nomma sur le champ six jeunes Chasseurs, qu'ils appellent *Iarbasou ;* & quoique tout ce qui étoit à mon usage ne consistât seulement qu'en un petit matelas, une couverture, & une cassette qui renfermoit les ornemens de nôtre Chapelle portative, ils le partagerent cependant, par ostentation, en trois canots differens, dans lesquels ils s'embarquerent promtement, pour le porter au vaisseau qui étoit prêt de mettre à la voile.

Nous sortîmes de la Chapelle avec differens sentimens de douleur, parce qu'enfin je n'avois pas moins de peine à les quitter, qu'ils en témoignerent de me perdre : il falut cependant nous separer, [538] pour joindre nos François qui m'attendoient pour aller à bord ; & je fus extrémement surpris, lorsque prenant congé de Messieurs les Capitaines qui restoient à l'Isle Percée, le Chef de nos Gaspesiens fendit la presse, s'approcha de moi, parut au milieu de l'assemblée avec un visage tout consterné de douleur & de tristesse, haussa vers le Ciel, & baissa plusieurs fois les yeux dessus la terre, & prononça en soûpirant ces paroles, *Akaia, akaia*, qui marquent ordinairement l'amertume & le déplaisir qu'ils ont dans le cœur ; il me prit la main, & me regardant fixement avec des yeux prêts à verser des larmes, il me dit en ces propres termes.

Hé bien donc, mon fils, la [539] resolution en est prise, tu veux nous abandonner & repasser en France ; car voila le grand canot de bois (en me montrant le navire dans lequel je devois m'embarquer) qu va te dérober aux Gaspesiens, pour te rendre à ton Païs, à tes parens, & à tes amis. Ah ! mon fils, si tu voïois mon cœur à present, tu verrois qu'il pleure des larmes de sang, dans le tems même que mes yeux pleurent des larmes d'eau, tant il est sensible à cette cruelle separation. Il s'arrêta tout court, & ne dit plus mot, selon la coûtume & la maniere des Sauvages, qui en agissent de-même ; soit pour reflechir à ce qu'ils ont à dire, ou pour donner le loisir & le tems à ceux qui les écoutent, d'éxaminer, d'approuver ou de [540] rejetter ce qu'ils ont avancé. Hé quoy donc, mon fils, ajoûta-t'il, seroit-il bien possible que tu aïes perdu si-tôt le souvenir du festin que tu nous fis autrefois à Gaspé, la premiere fois que tu vins demeurer dans nos cabannes, où aïant formé avec de la farine pêtrie dans la graisse & la moëlle d'orignac, autant de cœurs de pâte,que nous étions de Gaspesiens, tu les arrangeas dans un même plat d'écorce, voulant nous persuader que le plus grand de tous ces cœurs, qui cachoit & couvroit tous les autres, étoit la figure du tien, dont le zele & la charité renfermoit au-dedans de soi-même tous les cœurs des Sauvages, ni plus, ni moins que les meres renferment les enfans dans leur sein ? Tu étois [541] fâché, disois-tu, que la Nature ne t'en avoit donné qu'un seul en partage,

lequel tu souhaitois de multiplier autant qu'il étoit en ton pouvoir, par la distribution que tu nous faisois de ces cœurs de pâte, en disant à chacun de nous en particulier ces aimables paroles : *Tahoé nkamera mon ignemoulo :* Mon frere, je te donne mon cœur ; *nkameramon achkou oüiguidepcheup ;* vous cabannerez, vous logerez & demeurererez doresnavant dans mon cœur, qui veut devenir comme les vôtres, par l'union d'une amitié mutuelle & reciproque, tout Sauvage & tout Gaspesien. A peine eûs-tu fini ta harangue, qui acheva de te gagner les cœurs de la Gaspesie, qu'on ne parla plus que de danses & de fes- [542] tins, pour te marquer la joie sensible que nous avions du present que tu nous avois fait ; & parmi les acclamations universelles de toutes nos cabannes, un chacun s'efforçoit d'exprimer par les chansons que l'on chanta à ta loüange, le bonheur qu'il avoit de posseder le cœur du Patriarche : Dis-moi donc à present, ce cœur n'est il plus aujourd'hui le même qu'il étoit autrefois ? est-il donc tout-à-fait devenu François, & n'a-t'il plus rien de Gaspesien ? ou bien, veut-il vomir pour jamais les Sauvages, aprés les avoir reçûs & aimez tendrement ? Il s'arrêta pour la seconde fois : Si quelqu'un de nous, me dit-il ensuite, d'un ton de voix plus élevé & plus imperieux, t'a causé quelque [543] déplaisir, qui peut-être t'oblige de nous abandonner, ne sçais-tu pas, mon fils, que je suis ton pere, & le Chef de la Nation Gaspesienne ? comme ton pere, tu ne peux ignorer jusqu'à present, la sincerité de mon amitié ; je t'assûre même que je t'aimerai toûjours aussi tendrement que l'un de mes propres enfans : comme Ches des Sauvages, tu sçais bien que j'ai la puissance & le pouvoir en main, pour faire punir le coupable, si tu veux me le dénoncer ; ou si tu es dans le dessein de le cacher, suivant les maximes & les regles de la charité que tu nous as enseignées, tiens, mon fils, voila des robes de castor, de loutre & de marte que nous t'offrons volontiers, pour essuïer & effacer le chagrin que l'on [544] t'a donné, & l'indignation que tu peux avoir conçûë contre nous.

Il fit jetter en effet à mes pieds, par deux jeunes Sauvages, quelques-unes de ces pelleteries ; mais voïant que je refusois ces presens : Il est vrai, dit-il, que tu les as toûjours méprisez ; le peu d'état que tu en as fait, pendant que les François les recherchent avec tant d'empressement, nous a bien fait connoître il *y* a long-tems, que tu ne desirois rien au monde, que le salut de nos ames, & que nous étions trop pauvres & jamais assez riches, pour récompenser dignement les peines & les travaux que tu prenois, afin de nous faire vivre en bons Chrêtiens : mais si le peu que nous possedons n'a pas assez d'attrait pour t'enga- [545] ger à rester avec nous, il faut, mon fils, que je t'ouvre mon cœur, & que je te demande aujourd'hui, en presence du Soleil qui nous éclaire, s'il faut croire ce que tu nous as enseigné, ou s'il ne le faut pas croire ? Répons, & parles à present.

Vous remarquerez, s'il vous plaît, que les Sauvages n'interrompent jamais celuy qui harangue ; & ils blâment avec raison, ces entretiens, ces conversations indiscretes & peu reglées, où chacun de la compagnie veut dire son sentiment, sans se donner la patience d'écouter celuy des autres : c'est aussi pour ce sujet, qu'ils nous comparent à des cannes & aux oyes, qui crient, disent-ils, & qui parlent tous ensemble, comme les François. Il faut [546] attendre qu'ils aïent achevé tout ce qu'ils ont à dire, & qu'ils vous obligent à répondre, comme celuy-ci, qui m'engagea de luy témoigner en peu de mots, que je ne leur avois enseigné que ce que le Fils de Dieu avoit enseigné à tous les Chrêtiens ; & que par consequent ce n'étoit pas seulement assez de la croire, par la soûmission respectueuse qu'il devoit avoir à ses Commandemens ; mais encore, qu'il les

faloit observer religieusement, & mourir même, s'il en étoit necessaire, pour la verité & la défense de son saint Evangile.

S'il est ainsi, repliqua le Sauvage, de deux choses l'une ; ou tu es un menteur, ou tu n'es pas un bon Chrêtien : *Ouce choüen tahoé :* Tu es un men- [547] teur, mon frere, si tout ce que tu nous as enseigné n'est pas veritable ; ou tu n'es pas bon Chrêtien, puisque tu n'observes pas comme il faut les Commandemens de Jesus. Car enfin, je veux bien que tout le monde m'entende : tu as dit à nos enfans, qu'ils étoient obligez, sous peine d'être brûlez dans les Enfers, d'honorer leurs pere & mere ; que c'étoit un crime énorme de les abandonner, & de leur refuser le secours qu'ils en pouvoient esperer dans leurs besoins : Tes Instructions, & le Commandement de Dieu, qui dit ; *Koutche, kitche chibar, chaktou, baguisto skiginouidex ;* Honore & crains ton pere & ta mere, tu vivras longuement, ont retenu mon fils aîné dans ma cabanne, qui cependant [548] vouloit m'abandonner au milieu de l'Hiver, dans nos plus grands besoins : il a tué un grand nombre d'orignaux, il t'a fait bonne chere, & donné abondamment de la graisse à manger & de l'huile d'ours à boire dans nos festins, autant que tu en as pû souhaiter. François, encore un coup, mon fils aîné a demeuré avec son pere & sa mere, pour le respect qu'il portoit au Commandement de Jesus, & l'amitié qu'il avoit pour le Patriarche : Fais donc à present, à son éxemple, pour moi, pour ma femme & pour luy, ce qu'il a fait si genereusement pour toi. Tu m'appellois ton pere ; ma femme, disois-tu à tous les Sauvages, étoit ta mere, depuis que nous t'avions tous les deux enfanté dans nos [549] cabannes ; mes enfans étoient tes freres & tes enfans : Hé bien, maintenant, est-ce donc bien fait à un enfant, de quitter son pere, sa mere, ses freres & ses sœurs ? Est-ce ainsi que tu méprises le Commandement de Dieu, qui dit, *Koutche, kitche chibar, chaktou, baguisto skinouidex ?* S'il est vrai que les enfans qui honorent leurs parens vivent long-tems, n'apprehendes-tu pas de perir dans le grand lac, & de faire naufrage dans ces eaux salées, aprés nous avoir abandonné dans le besoin que nous avons de ton secours ? Helas, mon fils ! ajoûta ce Sauvage, aïant les larmes aux yeux, si quelqu'un de nous vient à mourir dans les bois, qui est ce qui aura le soin de nous montrer le chemin du Ciel, & de nous [550] assister à bien mourir ? Faloit-il donc prendre tant de peine pour nous instruire, comme tu as fait jusqu'à present, pour nous laisser dans un peril évident de mourir sans les Sacremens, que tu as a ministrez à mon frere, à mon oncle, & à plusieurs de nos vieillards moribons ? Si ton cœur demeure encore insensible à tout ce que je viens de dire, sçaches, mon fils, que le mien verse & pleure des larmes de sang en si grande abondance, qu'il m'étouffe la parole. C'est ainsi qu'il finit sa harangue, & me donna le tems de luy déclarer mes sentimens.

Comme toute la compagnie, autant surprise que je l'étois moi-même d'un semblable discours, auquel je ne m'attendois pas, étoit en peine de ce [551] que je répondrois à ce pauvre Sauvage, qui se disoit mon pere ; je luy fis connoître & luy dis, que mon cœur versoit plus de larmes de sang que le sien, à cause qu'il étoit luy seul plus sensible à nôtre commune separation, que tous les cœurs des Sauvages ensemble : Que je n'avois reçû aucun déplaisir de la Nation Gaspesienne, qui m'avoit toûjours puissamment engagé, par les amitiez & le bien qu'elle m'avoit fait, de rester avec elle, & d'en preferer la Mission, comme je la prefererois toûjours, si l'occasion se presentoit, à toutes celles qu'on voudroit me donner dans la Nouvelle France : Que je le reconnoissois encore pour mon

pere, autant & plus que jamais ; & que je le priois aussi de tout [552] mon cœur, de me considerer toûjours comme son fils : Qu'il faloit observer religieusement tout ce que je leur avois enseigné du devoir des enfans envers leurs pere & mere, exprimez dans le quatriéme Commandement de Dieu ; *Koutche, kitche chibar, chaktou, &c.* Que bien loin de pratiquer le contraire à leur égard, je ne repassois en France que pour le mettre plus efficacement en pratique, puisque c'étoit pour obeïr à Dieu dans la personne de mon Superieur, qui me tenoit lieu de Pere, & dans le dessein de persuader à quelques-uns de mes Freres, de les venir instruire. Que je ne les abandonnois pas dans leur besoin sans secours, d'autant que je leur laissois un autre moi-même, dans la per- [553] sonne du R. P. Claude Moreau, extrémement zelé pour leur salut. Que j'avois écoûté paisiblement tout ce qu'il m'avoit dit, plûtôt comme l'effet de son amitié, que d'un reproche outrageant qu'il eût voulu me faire, aprés les avoir aimé si tendrement : Mais qu'enfin, je ne pouvois m'empêcher de luy témoigner que mon cœur avoit été touché jusqu'au vif, en me demandant s'il n'étoit plus Gaspesien, & s'il vouloit vomir les Sauvages pour jamais. Tu te trompes, mon pere, luy dis-je d'un ton de voix assez severe, mon cœur est plus Gaspesien que jamais ; & dans le tems même que tu te persuades qu'il se retressit, il devient plus grand de jour en jour en jour, pour y loger & [554] recevoir tous ceux de ta Nation : Il voudroit, ce cœur, se multiplier, afin de se trouver dans tous les endroits où sont les Gaspesiens, pour les instruire ; & je t'assûre que je ne repasse en France, que dans le dessein où je suis, de faire à mon retour, par le ministere de nos Missionnaires, ce qu'il m'étoit impossible de faire moi seul. Ce sera pour lors, que tu confesseras que mon cœur est bien plus grand que tu ne penses ; & que bien loin de vomir & de rejetter les Sauvages, il cesseroit de vivre, s'il étoit un moment sans inclination pour les Gaspesiens.

S'il est ainsi, répondit au même instant un certain *Nemidoüades*, il faut que je passe en France avec le Patriarche ; il a raison, il a de l'esprit, & [555] nous n'en avons pas autant que luy ; il ne recherche que nôtre nôtre salut : mais je veux que nous nous embarquions dans des navires differens ; afin que si l'un de nous vient à perir, l'autre se puisse sauver, pour en apporter la nouvelle, ce qui seroit impossible, si nous faisions tous deux naufrage dans un même vaisseau. Il alloit nous dire quelqu'autre chose, lorsque le Capitaine nous avertit qu'il étoit tems de partir.

Nos Sauvages demeurerent au bord de la mer, durant nôtre embarquement ; & je vous avouë que j'eus un déplaisir sensible, considerant avec une lunette d'approche nos pauvres Gaspesiens, qui resterent toûjours dans la même place où je les avois laissé, jusqu'à [556] ce que nôtre navire aïant doublé la Pointe au Loup-marin, l'Isle de Bonaventure, que nous laissâmes entre nous & la terre-ferme, me priva de la satisfaction de les voir, & d'en être vûs.

La navigation fut également promte, & heureuse ; en sorte que nous arrivâmes à Honfleur trente jours aprés nôtre départ de l'Isle Percée. Nous prîmes ensuite la route de Paris, où le Reverendissime Pere Germain Allart, & le tres-Reverend Pere Potentien Ozon Provincial actuel des Recollets d'Artois, ménagerent avec tant de succez les interêts de nos Missions, que le premier obtint du Roi, l'établissement de l'Hospice que nous avons presentement à Quebec ; & le second, des Lettres de fa- [557] veur de Monsieur Tronçon Superieur des Messieurs du Seminaire de Saint Sulpice, à Monsieur d'Ollier Superieur des Messieurs du Seminaire de Mont-Roïal en Canada, en vertu desquelles mondit

Sieur d'Ollier eut la bonté de nous accorder genereusement une espace de terrein sur le bord du fleuve, avec pouvoir d'y bâtir une Maison de Mission, avec l'agrément de Monseigneur l'Evêque, pour la consolation spirituelle des Habitans de Mont-Roïal.

Pendant que ces Reverends Peres agissoient de concert pour obtenir ces nouveaux établissemens, l'obeïssance me permit de retourner dans nôtre chere Province d'Artois, où tout le monde, pour ainsi dire, parens, amis, Reli- [558] ligieux & Seculiers, firent leurs efforts afin d'empêcher & de me faire perdre le dessein que j'avois formé de retourner en Canada. Peut-être aurois je succombé aux instances de ces personnes, qui ne cherchoient dans mon sejour en France, que leur propre & seule satisfaction, si le tres-R. P. Potentien Ozon, qui avoit passé deux fois en ce nouveau Monde, en qualité de Commissaire & Superieur de nos Missions Canadiennes, n'eût dissipé tous ces obstacles par une de ses Lettres, en me faisant connoître que toutes les difficultez que je luy proposois n'étoient plus de saison, & qu'il ne s'agissoit pas de penetrer la volonté de Dieu sur une affaire, où elle paroissoit trop évidemment dans celle des Superieurs des [559] deux Provinces de Saint Denis & de Saint Antoine ; mais bien de l'éxecuter au plûtôt : attendu même que Monseigneur l'Evêque de Quebec & le R. P. Valentin le Roux Superieur de nos Missions, demandoient avec instance mon retour en Canada.

Il n'en falut pas davantage pour me déterminer à faire un sacrifice de toutes les repugnances que je pouvois avoir, de quitter une seconde fois nôtre chere Province : convaincu parfaitement que l'esprit du Seigneur residoit dans ce grand Serviteur de Dieu, je reçûs sa Lettre & ses avis comme la décision de mon sort ; & pour ne plus être exposé davantage aux attaques que l'amitié naturelle des parens & des amis me livroit tous les [560] jours, afin de m'engager à rester au Païs, je sortis de Bapaume pour aller à Arras, y faire ma retraite annuelle, & me disposer au second voïage que je devois faire dans la Nouvelle France. Ils semble que Dieu agrea mon sacrifice, puisque celuy de nos Religieux qui s'étoit opposé le plus jusqu'alors à mon retour, se trouva luy-même tellement changé, huit jours aprés mon départ, qu'il demanda avec tant d'empressement de venir avec moi en Canada, que les Superieurs se rendirent à ses instantes prieres : cette nouvelle me fut d'autant plus agreable, que j'étois persuadé de la capacité, & de la vertu de ce Religieux, & du grand bien qu'il feroit, comme il a fait dans les Missions Françoi- [561] ses & Iroquoises, qu'il a cultivées durant six années, avec une singuliere édification.

J'en écrivis aussi-tot à nos Superieurs, pour les informer de la resolution du R. P. François Wasson, qui vouloit passer avec moi en Canada : en effet, nous partîmes incessamment de Bapaume pour Paris, où j'eus l'honneur de recevoir la visite de Monsieur Macé tres-digne Ecclesiastique de Saint Sulpice, homme d'une vertu consommée, & d'un zele veritablement Apostolique pour la Mission de la Nouvelle France, qui me pria instament de m'embarquer avec deux Religieuses Hospitalieres de Beaufort en Vallée, que Monseigneur d'Angers vouloit bien confier à mes soins jusques à Quebec. Quelque indi- [562] gne que je me crûs de la conduite & de la direction de ces saintes Filles, il m'obligea cependant de condescendre à sa demande, & ne sortit pas de chez nous, qu'il n'eût tiré parole que nous irions au Convent de ces bonnes Religieuses, & leur donnerions avis du tems auquel elles devoient se rendre à la Rochelle, pour s'embarquer dans les premiers navires : en sorte que toutes choses étant dis-

posées, nous partîmes de Paris, & nous arrivâmes heureusement, vers les Fêtes de la Pentecôte, aux Hospitalieres de Beaufort en Vallée. La Reverende Mere des Roseaux, que Mademoiselle de Melun, si celebre par la pratique des vertus les plus éminentes du Christianisme, avoit mise en ce saint Monas- [563] tere, en étoit devenuë la Superieure : animée par les éxemples de pieté de sa sainte Maîtresse, & brûlant de ce même feu de la charité du prochain qui consuma le cœur de cette grande Princesse, elle fit un sacrifice aux pauvres malades de Mont-Roïal, de ses deux cheres & bien-aimées Filles, les Sœurs Gallard & Monmusseau ; la premiere, fille d'un Conseiller d'Angers ; la seconde, d'un fameux Marchand. Comme ces deux bonnes Religieuses étoient d'une vertu solide, & fortifiées de l'Esprit de Dieu qui les conduisoit en Canada, il semble aussi qu'elles ne sortirent du Cloître, que pour en donner des marques éclatantes ; soit durant le sejour qu'elles firent à la Rochelle, où Monseigneur l'E- [564] vêque les reçut comme des veritables épouses de Jesus-Christ ; soit durant la navigation, que Nôtre-Seigneur rendit tres-heureuse, par les prieres & la sainteté de ces ames Religieuses, qui faisoient leurs Oraisons mentales, Lectures spirituelles, recitoient leur Office en commun, comme si le navire fût devenu pour elles un autre Convent de Beaufort en Vallée. Elles parurent insensibles à toutes les incommoditez qui sont ordinaires sur la mer ; mais elles ne pûrent s'empêcher de fremir & de trembler comme des ames chastes, apprenant que nous étions en danger d'être bien-tôt attaquez par un navire Turc, qui venoit à toutes voiles dessus nous, ou pour s'emparer de nôtre vaisseau, [565] ou pour le couler à fond. Le canon que l'on disposoit, les mousquets, les piques, la poudre & le plomb que l'on distribuoit à tous les Passagers avec assez de precipitation, ne les effraïoit pas : incertaines de ce qu'elles deviendroient, si les Turcs, qui s'approchoient à vûë d'œil de nous, se rendoient les maîtres du navire, elles apprehendoient tout pour leur pureté ; & preferant genereusement la mort à la perte de ce precieux tresor, qui couroit risque d'être exposé aux insultes & aux violences de ces ennemis du nom Chrêtien, elles se jetterent à genoux, pour implorer le secours du Ciel, & me prierent, avec une une ferveur d'esprit extraordinaire, d'approuver la resolution qu'elles [566] avoient formée, de se jetter à la mer aussitôt que les Turcs monteroient dans le vaisseau ; aimant mieux, disoient-elles, s'abandonner aux soins amoureux de la Providence, & mourir mille fois, que de tomber entre les mains & d'être soüillées par la brutalité de ces Infideles. Le Ciel cependant se contenta de leur bonne volonté : on se mit en état de resister au navire Turc, qui approchoit à la portée du canon de nôtre vaisseau ; & comme il étoit beaucoup meilleur voilier que nous, on se resolut de l'attendre, & de se mettre en état d'attaquer & de se défendre. Cette fermeté & la resolution que nous fîmes paroître, de vouloir combattre l'ennemi, jetta la terreur parmi ces Barbares, [567] lesquels se persuadant que nous étions beaucoup plus de monde que nous ne paroissions sur le tillac, apprehenderent eux-mêmes le succez d'un combat où ils commençoient à perdre l'esperance de vaincre & de triompher ; ils jugerent à propos de ne rien risquer, changerent de bord, passerent en arriere de nôtre navire, & se contenterent de nous faire des menaces, ausquelles on répondit avec une fierté qui ne cedoit rien du tout à leurs insultes : en sorte que ces Infideles s'étant éloignez de nous, jusqu'à nous faire perdre leur vaisseau de vûë, on chanta le *Te Deum*, en action de graces ; & l'on attribua cet heureux succez aux merites & aux prieres ferventes de ces bonnes Reli- [568] gieuses, que le Ciel consola dans la continuation du voïage,

par une navigation autant heureuse qu'elles le pouvoient souhaiter, & qui nous fit voir l'embouchûre du fleuve de Saint Laurent, trente jours aprés nôtre départ de la Rochelle.

Le vent s'étant rendu de jour en jour plus favorable, on moüilla bien-tôt l'anchre devant Quebec, où je m'étois rendu en canot, pour informer Monseigneur de Laval premier Evêque de Quebec, & Messieurs ses Grands Vicaires, de l'heureuse arrivée de nos deux Religieuses Hospitalieres, qui avoient genereusement exposé leur vie aux perils de la mer, pour se consacrer entierement au service des malades de Mont-Roïal, [569] dans le Convent & l'Hôpital fondez par la charité & les liberalitez de Madame de Bullion. On les reçut avec tout le bon accueil & le respect possible ; elles furent conduites aux Ursulines de Quebec, & quelques jours aprés à Mont-Roïal, par Monsieur Soüart leur Directeur, grand serviteur de Dieu, dont la memoire sera toûjours en benediction dans la Nouvelle France, par l'odeur de ses vertus, qu'il y a répanduë durant quarante années de Mission, jusqu'à une heureuse vieillesse.

Le Reverend Pere Valentin le Roux, qui ne perdoit aucune occasion de procurer les établissement de nos Missions, destina le Pere François [570] Wasson pour continuer celle que nous avions aux Iroquois, où ce bon Religieux a demeuré l'espace de six ans, soit durant la paix, soit durant la guerre que nous eûmes avec ces Barbares, aux insultes desquels ce zelé Missionnaire étoit continuellement exposé. Le Reverend Pere Superieur m'ordonna aussi de monter avec luy, & de servir d'Aumônier à Monseigneur le Comte de Frontenac Gouverneur General de la Nouvelle France, jusqu'au Mont-Roïal ; afin de ménager auprés de Monsieur d'Ollier Superieur du Seminaire, & Seigneur de l'Isle du Mont-Roïal, un espace de terrein quil nous accorda genereusement, aprés avoir [571] fait lecture de la Lettre que je luy presentai de la part de Monsieur Tronçon, nous donnant en sa consideration quatre arpens de terre situez sur le bord du fleuve, proche la Chapelle de la Sainte Vierge, vis à vis d'une petite élevation sur laquelle on a bâti un moulin, commodes & tres-propres pour l'abord des canots & des chaloupes, & dont il envoïa le Contract de concession au Reverend Pere Valentin le Roux, aussi-tôt que je fus de retour à Quebec. Deux jours avant mon départ pour ma Mission, de nos Gaspesiens, ou celuy qui se disoit mon pere, & sa famille, me reçûrent avec tout le bon accueil qu'il leur fut possible. J'obmets ici les circon- [572] stances de cette seconde Mission, que je reserve pour le *Premier établissement de la Foi dans la Nouvelle France.*

Fin.

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De l'Imprimerie de Laurent Rondet.

[i]

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